

# In Memoriam



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*From a Photograph by George Eastman*

*Yours very truly  
John Wilson*

# In Memoriam:

REV. JOHN WILSON, M.A., PH.D.,

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

SANDYFORD, GLASGOW.

*EDITED BY HIS SON-IN-LAW,*

J. A. RUDD.

“A lover of Jesus Christ.”

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The Editor desires to acknowledge most gratefully the very valuable assistance rendered him by the Rev. JAS. JEFFREY, M.A., of Pollokshields, in the preparation of the work.



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## Biographical Sketch.

BY

REV. JAMES JEFFREY, M. A.

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IN the work of the Christian Church one or two, by their pre-eminent gifts, occupy commanding positions and acquire a wide influence. These, however, are the exceptions. The pulpits of our churches are filled by men of good abilities, earnest spirit, and devoted work. They have no ambition to stand in the front rank, or to be leaders in church courts. The Master has given them a ministry to fulfil, of instruction, consolation, help and counsel, and to that they devote their whole strength and time, finding their highest reward in the consciousness of doing their duty, and enjoying the approval of their great Master. Such an one was the subject of this brief sketch, of whom we may say that he did with all his might whatsoever his hand found to do.

John Wilson belonged to Edinburgh, and was born 27th May, 1832. He was sprung from what we call the middle classes, his father being a merchant and burgess of the city. Like all who are natives of Edin-

burgh, his heart ever turned to the Scottish Capital, and he loved its beauty and traditions. There is much in the old town to captivate the fancy of a boy, and there are traces in his early papers of the influence of his birth-place on his patriotic and religious feeling. Even the place of his education strengthened these feelings. For several years he attended the Free Normal School, which occupies one of the most picturesque and historical of the old Edinburgh buildings, the Moray House, in the Canon-gate, round which gather memories of the great Argyle, whose wedding took place there on the very day that his princely rival Montrose was led to his doom. After passing through the Normal School, Mr Wilson intended to pursue a business career, and was actually engaged for some time in business, but was so deeply impressed by a sermon preached by the late Rev. G. Marshall Middleton, then of Kinross, that he resolved to study for the ministry, and, after some private tuition in classics, he proceeded to the University, studying Latin and Greek under Pillans and Dunbar, receiving from them a taste for classical learning, which he continued to cultivate all through life. The deep interest he manifested in philosophical studies was first kindled by Sir William Hamilton; but the class in which he took the greatest pleasure was that of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, under the teaching of the late William Edminston Aytoun. There he appears to have formed his style, so chaste, and crisp, and clear, and to have begun to "lisp in numbers," for his fine ear led him instinctively to choose the most musical word to express his thought. At the close of

this curriculum, Wilson took the degree of Master of Arts.

A more powerful influence in forming young Wilson's mind and religious opinions was the ministry under which he was trained. His father was an elder in Nicolson Street United Presbyterian Church, then under the ministry of the Rev. Dr George Johnston. Dr Johnston was a man of no ordinary gifts. To a somewhat stately appearance, and slightly affected tone, was united a most tender heart. Of scholarly tastes himself, he took the deepest interest in the young men of his church, and especially in all students connected with the congregation, encouraging them in their studies. For some years Mr Wilson taught a class in the Sabbath school, a work for which he was peculiarly well adapted. In his later years he found great delight in his Bible class, and also in his young men's literary society. There is nothing to indicate at what time Mr Wilson came under divine impressions. He himself was always very reticent on the subject, but he joined the church at eighteen. The sincerity of his faith it was impossible to doubt; his life proclaimed it, and it made itself felt through the whole of his preaching and teaching. Most probably he was one of those who, growing up under religious training, have no consciousness of any distinct change, but only of a growing trust in the Saviour, and a warmer love to His person. It may be that such Christians are not so emotional in their experience as others, but it will often be found that the current of the spiritual life flows deep, and quiet, and strong, under an apparently undisturbed surface.

That which exercised the most powerful influence over young Mr Wilson, at this stage of his life, was a young men's society, known as the Noetic Society, meeting in the hall of Nicolson Street Church, but not confined to members or adherents of that church. It included amongst its numbers not a few divinity students, and formed a common meeting ground for kindred spirits. Mr Wilson early became a member of this society, and on more than one occasion occupied the president's chair. From the first he proved himself "a cultured and thoughtful essayist," possessed of a free style, over which he seemed to have perfect command, and writing on a wide range of subjects. One of the features of the Noetic was a manuscript magazine, circulated amongst the members. Of this magazine Mr Wilson was for some time the editor, and I have had the pleasure of perusing several of the numbers. A volume lies before me, beautifully lithographed from the neat copy, most of which is in the penmanship of Dr Wilson, he, as editor, having written out in his own hand almost all the articles of one or two numbers for the lithographer.

His own papers are singularly free from the crudity of thought and faults of style often found in young writers. They indicate careful attention to the subjects treated, close and connected thought, and a clear and forcible style. His subjects are varied:—"The Causes of Human Progression," "The Desire of Approbation," "Requisites of Prevailing Prayer," "Cosmical Reflections on a Sabbath Eve," "Mutual Influence," "Christian Ambition," "The Study of the Sacred Scriptures," all are treated with the ease of an

experienced writer. I have no means of knowing when Mr Wilson first began to court the poetic muse. In later days he appeared to find in verse the fittest expression of his thought. In this volume, however, are two or three pieces worthy of being preserved as a specimen of Mr Wilson's work in his student days. One is evidently suggested by the song, "O, Gin I was a Baron's Heir."

It is named "Lassie, gin ye lo'ed me," and is set to music :—

Now gladsome spring, wi' sunny show'rs,  
Brings baek the green leaf to the bow'rs,  
And decks the earth wi' fairest flowers,  
Lassie, will ye lo'e me.

Sae sweetly sing the tuneful thrang  
In merry note the blythe day lang,  
But sweeter far to me their sang,  
Lassie, gin ye lo'ed me.

For, O, gin ye were a' my ain,  
Nae thocht I'd gi'e to joy or pain ;  
Bat to my heart I'd tak' ye fain,  
Lassie, gin ye lo'ed me.

And aye when I cam' hame at e'en  
An' saw the housie neat and clean,  
An' met thee wi' thy smiling een,  
Lassie, I wad lo'e thee.

And far 'boon a' on earth or sea  
I'd prize the kind blink o' thine e'e ;  
The joy of life thou'dst be to me,  
Lassie, gin ye lo'ed me.

And when we tottered doon the brae,  
Still love would cheer our closing day ;  
Nae clouds should ever dark the way,  
Lassie, gin ye lo'ed me.

There is a martial ring about the next piece—the heart's utterance of a Scottish patriot:—

### THE GRAVE OF BRUCE.

(Suggested by the exhumation of his body at Dunfermline Abbey,  
18th February, 1818.)

Hark ! the music softly swelling  
Round the Abbey's ruined walls—  
Spirits of departed heroes,  
Singing in their airy halls.  
Spirits they of warlike chieftains,  
And the bravest of the brave ;  
They who, 'neath a Scottish banner,  
Bled and found a warrior's grave.  
Round the cherished spot they hover,  
Where their noble leader lies ;  
Guard his bones with veneration,  
While his soul is in the skies.  
List ! they sing of all his mighty  
Deeds of valour, deeds of fame ;  
Do I see them ? Is it fancy ?  
Do I hear the Bruce's name ?  
All unseen, these loving spirits  
Haunt the spot to them so dear ;  
Falls their music, soft as snow flakes,  
Only on the poet's ear.  
For though Scotland's sons have never  
Lost remembrance of their king,  
O'er his resting place oblivion  
Hath stretched out her raven wing.  
Gone the pomp that once attended  
To the tomb—the hero dead ;  
Gone the hearts that bled with sorrow ;  
Gone the tears that once were shed.  
Crumbled now to dust the Abbey—  
Priest and worshippers are gone ;  
Gone the altar, and the tablet  
Where the Bruce's name once shone.



Hushed the anthem once breathed upward,  
Borne aloft on angel's wing,  
Long have joined their king in heaven,  
Who his requiem did sing.  
Like an idle dream of fancy  
All these now are passed away ;  
Scarce a stone remains to tell us  
Where the Scottish monarch lay.  
Still, beneath, there lies a treasure,  
Long from mortal eye concealed ;  
And the secret hid for ages,  
Now at length shall be revealed.  
Where the grass had long been growing,  
Green, and wild, and rank, and high,  
There a vault is now laid open  
To the blue-eyed, smiling sky.  
Fly, as night before the morning,  
Five long centuries of gloom ;  
Sport like fairies now the sunbeams  
In the new-discovered tomb.  
Now they light upon the monarch —  
Welcome as a friend the dead —  
Wreath a halo for his temples,  
Fain to gild his crown of lead.\*  
Haply visions fair in dreamland  
Has the sleeping hero seen ;  
Witnessed there his country's struggles,  
Seen its triumphs, too, I ween :  
Warriors bold as ever followed  
'Neath the banner which he waved,  
And with breasts as patriotic,  
Have their foes, like lions, braved.  
Maidens blooming, fair and modest,  
As e'er waved their snowy hand,  
Like pure gowans on our hill-sides,  
Still adorned his native land.  
Minstrel songs as sweet as ever  
Fell upon a Scottish ear,

\* The allusion here is to the chaplet of lead which encircled the Bruce's head when his body was discovered.

Still, like incense, rose to heaven,  
Music fit for heaven to hear.  
Glad, methinks, would be his bosom,  
When he saw dread battles cease,  
And the foes, so long at variance,  
Joined in everlasting peace.  
Such his dreams. But hark ! the music  
Filling all the air again ;  
Now it changes into voices,  
Chanting thus in meaning strain—  
“ Scotland, let thy heart be joyful  
For thy greatest king is found ;  
Come, approach his long-hid chamber,  
Softly, for 'tis holy ground.  
Sons of Scotland, pay him homage,  
For your fathers loved him well ;  
Ye who nestle in her mountains,  
Ye who in her valleys dwell,  
Shed one parting tear of sorrow  
Ere you leave the sacred scene,  
Take one farewell look, for never  
Will again his like be seen.”

On the completion of his University course, Mr Wilson entered the Divinity Hall, in August, 1853. It was in the days when the curriculum included five sessions of two months' attendance at the professor's lectures, and bi-monthly examinations by the Presbyteries. The professors were all men of mark in their day. Dr John Brown, *facile princeps*, as an exegetical expositor of the word of God, a man of venerable look, saintly character, and winning influence over the minds and hearts of men ; Dr James Harper, with his keen incisive mind, whose criticisms of the students' discourses, if sometimes severe, were always just ; Dr Lindsay, a profound scholar, a sagacious adviser ; and Dr M'Michael, with his clear

intellect, his polished style, and his genial manner. These were the teachers under whom Mr Wilson studied, and no student entered with greater earnestness and diligence into the study of the Scriptures, in the original language, than he did. To the end of his life he made it a practice to read the Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew every day; and, during the last few years of his life, in order to fit himself to master the questions of the higher criticism, he attended the class of Professor Robertson, in Glasgow University, for the study of Hebrew and the cognate oriental languages. Not many of his fellow students are now left. Some of them have won for themselves a good degree. Dr Copland became a medical practitioner in New Zealand; Andrew Baillie, a devoted missionary, both in Calabar and Jamaica. Mr Brown, our esteemed minister in Lochgelly; Mr Duncanson, of West Calder; Dr Hogg, of the American Presbyterian Mission in Egypt; Professor Salmon, of New Zealand; and our own much esteemed Indian missionary, Dr Shoolbred, were amongst those who entered the Hall in the same year; while Dr Robt. Anderson, of St. George's Road Church, another of Dr Wilson's fellow students, survived him only a few weeks. So eager was his thirst for learning, and his desire to be thoroughly equipped for the work of the ministry, that at the close of his fifth session at the Hall Mr Wilson, accompanied by his friend Mr James Copland, left to attend classes in Berlin and Heidelberg during the winter session. They travelled by Hamburg, Hanover, Brunswick, Magdeburg to Berlin, where they matriculated as students, and remained till the end of February, 1858. They

were present in Berlin at the time of the festivities in honour of the marriage of our Princess Royal with Prince Frederick Wilhelm of Prussia, and their names were attached to the address presented by the English residents on that auspicious occasion. The two students at once put themselves under a teacher, and were soon quite at home in the language, and able to enjoy the lectures. I cannot say under what professors he studied. There is a passing allusion in his diary to hearing Weber expounding Sanserit to a class of two, Benary on Sallust, Piper on the methods of theology, and Henning on political economy to a class of seven.

At the end of the Berlin session, Mr Wilson and his friend went on an extensive tour through Prussia, Saxony, Austria, and Italy, visiting Wittenberg, where Luther, at one time a lecturer in the University, began his great fight with the Church of Rome, by nailing his ninety-five theses to the door of the Schloss-Kirche. From Wittenberg he went to Halle, Leipzig, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Gratz, Adelsberg, Trieste, Venice, Milan, Turin, Genoa, Rome by Civita Vecchia. These were the days when Rome was the capital of the Papal States, and the young traveller notes in his diary the number of priests to be seen everywhere, and the prominence given to the worship of the Virgin. He was present at the interesting ceremony of the Pope's washing the Cardinals' feet, and received the Papal benediction. After a month in the Holy City, he passed on to Naples, ascended Vesuvius, visited Pompeii, with its interesting remains, recalling the life of the Roman world eighteen hundred years ago.

He returned by Leghorn, from which he made a run to Florence, then by sea to Marseilles, on to Lyons, and Geneva, taking time to visit Martigny and the Tete Noire, then by Lausanne, Neuchatel, Basle, Strasburg to Heidelberg. After this interesting tour, which only cost each of them about £18, the two friends settled down to hard study in Heidelberg, and closed their session by taking the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It was about the only occasion on which Scottish students had finished their studies at a German university by taking the ordinary degree; and I remember the talk among the students on their return, and the wonder expressed if the venerable D.D.'s of the Edinburgh Presbytery would address the two young students as Dr Wilson and Dr Copland. From this visit to Germany dates Dr Wilson's knowledge of German literature and philosophy, of which he continued an earnest student to the close of his life; and not less marked was the general culture he acquired in the course of his varied travels, for he had both the artist's and the poet's vision for the beautiful in nature and in art.

Dr Wilson was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in the end of 1858, and, according to the old custom, did not go on the Probationers' Roll till April, 1859. Called by the congregation now known as Prince's Street, Arbroath, he preferred the call addressed to him by what was then known as the Mitchell Church, Glasgow, over which he was ordained, 5th June, 1860. Of the members of the Presbytery of Glasgow at that time, only seven survive, and only three continue to discharge the full

work of the ministry, The Mitchell Church was really a Mission Church, designed to carry on Evangelistic work among the masses residing in the Anderston district of the city, between Main Street and the River. Its first minister was Mr William Miller, formerly of Longridge, in whose ministry a church was built in Cheapside Street, and called the Mitchell Church, after the late Dr Mitchell of Wellington Street Church, as many of the promoters and supporters of the new movement belonged to that congregation. It might have been thought that such a sphere was scarcely suitable for a cultured student like Dr Wilson; but, from the very first, he set himself to consecrate all his gifts to the service of his Master in mission work, with a high sense of his duty and his responsibility, and, so far as is known, he never regretted his choice. Under his earnest ministry, the congregation rapidly increased, was soon enabled to dispense with external aid, and in 1873 entered into their present church in Breadalbane Street. It was largely owing to Dr Wilson's untiring efforts that the church was erected, and freed from debt. From the first, Dr Wilson set before him a very high ideal of his work. Though originally his congregation was composed to a large extent of the poorer classes, he took the greatest pains with his pulpit preparations, giving them the full benefit of careful study and of his cultured mind. His sermons were all carefully written out. The same care was bestowed on his prayer meeting addresses. It was an earnest, practical gospel of a living, loving Saviour, the friend and helper of all who trusted him, which Dr Wilson preached. The

style was clear and crisp, the sentences short, and were delivered with a telling incisiveness that carried the truth home. A man of warm sympathies, he was untiring in visitation, spending much of his time in the homes of his people—their friend, and counsellor, and comforter. Nothing was left untried to make his work tell. He was often found preaching three times, or holding, more specially, evangelistic services on Sabbath evenings. Bands of workers visited in the surrounding districts, distributing tracts, which were written by himself, and are well worthy of finding a wider circulation.

And all the time he was a hard student. He kept up his scholarly habits to the last. It was his custom to read carefully a chapter of the Hebrew Bible every day, and of the Greek Testament, keeping himself abreast of the leading critical controversies of his time. The visitor to his study at once noted on the walls, in large letters, tables with the Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and Sanscrit alphabets. It has been already noticed that for several years during his late ministry he attended the class of Professor Robertson in the University for the study of Hebrew and cognate languages, and belonged to the Oriental Society, formed for the promotion of the study of Oriental languages and literatures. His easy familiarity with German gave him access to the leading philosophical and critical reviews, of which he was often urged to undertake translations, but, with characteristic modesty, he invariably declined. In this connection it may be proper to allude to a small society of ministers, of which Dr Wilson was one of the leading spirits,

known as the "Greek Club." It has always been the custom for some of the ministers of the city to meet together in social reunions, in order to discuss more freely the leading theological and other questions of the day than they can do in Presbytery. When the writer came to Glasgow, in 1873, he found such a club in existence, known as the "Greek Club," meeting once a fortnight during the winter season for the reading of Greek authors and for general discussion. At that time its members included Dr Leckie; Dr Robert Johnstone, now Professor; Dr Hutchison, then of Renfrew; Dr Whitelaw; Mr Buchanan, then of Greyfriars; Mr Roberts, then of Dennistoun; Mr H. E. Fraser, of Langside Road; Dr Wilson and myself. Amongst those who joined after that were Mr Young, of Parkhead; Mr Henderson, of Bearsden; Mr Rutherford, of Kelvingrove; Mr M'Conchie, late of Mearns; and Mr Law, now of Kilmarnock; while one or two others occasionally joined its ranks. As may be imagined, during these years, a considerable amount of Greek literature was read, and many interesting questions discussed. In these meetings Dr Wilson took the liveliest interest, and when the reading included the great Greek dramatists, he frequently delighted us by turning the whole of the evening's readings into verse. In this way he translated the whole of the "Iphigenia in Tauris," part of the "Antigone," the twenty-second and twenty-third books of the "Odyssey." Once, during the last year, he amused us by rendering the first thirty lines of the eighteenth book of the Odyssey into broad Scotch. It is the scene where the beggar Irus insults Ulysses, and provokes a fight:—



There cam' a common beggar loun,  
 Wha used to beg through a' the toon ;  
 He cow'd a' for a greedy kyte,  
 Could eat and drink frae morn to night ;  
 Yet naet o' power or pith had he,  
 Though braw and buirdly to the e'e.  
 Arnæus was his richtfu' name,  
 His mother gied 'm't, worthy dame,  
 E'en frae the day she brocht him hame ;  
 But Irus all the birkies ca'd him,  
 For gau'n their errands when they bade him.  
 Sae up he comes, fu' big and crouse,  
 To drive Ulysses frae's ain house ;  
 He railed at him wi' jibe and jeer,  
 Loot flee his words for a' to hear.  
 " Get out the gate, auld ne'erdoweel !  
 Quick ! or they'll hurl you by the heel ;  
 See they're a' winkin' me to do't !  
 Though I'd be shamed to drag you out.  
 Up wi' ye then, or faith we'll soon  
 Ha'e words or blows or a' is done. "

Ulysses, that long headed wight,  
 Gied ae deep scowl as dark as night,  
 Then said, " my frien', nae haet o' wrang  
 I do to you by deed or tongue ;  
 Nor do I grudge the gifts that ony  
 Be-tow on you, though they are mony :  
 This threshold braid can haud us twain,  
 Ye needna grudge what's no' your ain ;  
 Ye seem a gangrel like mysel'—  
 'Tis God dispenses wae or weal.  
 Tak tent ye press me no' o'er sair  
 To try my strength in fisty war,  
 For, aiblins, ye may stir my bile,  
 And auld's I am I might befile,  
 Wi' sore, your lips and brawny breast ;  
 Neist day would bring me greater rest,  
 For second visit, I jalouse,  
 Ne'er will ye mak' to Ulysses' house. "

Then wrathful spak' the vagrant loun —  
“ Losh ! how the glutton's tongue rins on  
Like slatterin', chatterin' kitchen crone :  
I'm thinking I'll gi'e him a fright  
When my twa neives sal on him light ;  
I'll howk the teeth a' oot his mou',  
As frae a crap-devourin' soo.  
Tighten your waist then ! let them a'  
Look on to judge atween us twa ;  
But how can ye stand up to fecht  
A younger carl, and twice your weight ? ”

In such studies, Dr Wilson found recreation in the midst of a ministry of incessant toil. Of a restless and nervous temperament, he could not bear idleness ; and if unable to visit the Continent, enriching and enlarging his mind with its art treasures, he preferred to remain at home reading and studying. Some ministers' idea of a summer holiday is to lounge about giving mind and body a complete rest ; but, somehow, Dr Wilson could not do that, and after a day or two at the coast he would slip away back to his study and his books. Painting, too, was for a time a favourite amusement, and with a true artistic taste, and an open eye for the beautiful, he gave evidence that, had he received earlier training, he might have been a successful artist.

Nothing, however, seemed to yield him more pleasure and benefit than his occasional visits to the Continent. His familiarity with the Continental languages, and early acquaintance with Continental scenes in his college days, made travelling a great enjoyment. In 1869 he visited “ the Land of Luther,” and the scenes associated with the great reformer ; and on various

occasions he found his way across the Channel—interesting his own people by lively sketches of these holiday runs, with which he favoured them on his return.

The longest of these holiday travels was necessitated by a serious breakdown in 1878 and 1879. In consequence of a bronchial affection, his medical man advised a voyage to the Mediterranean in the spring of 1878. The voyage not having the desired effect, he was compelled, in February of the following year, to avoid the cold winds of spring, and find rest and recovered health in the Island of Capri. He was never tired of recalling Capri. The wonderful colouring of sky, sand, sea, and rock; the picturesque views at every turn; the interesting associations connected with Tiberius, whose favourite summer residence it was, all combined to afford endless delight to an artistic and cultured student like Dr Wilson.

Dr Wilson's home life was very happy. He was married on 6th August, 1861, to Miss Henderson, who mourns his loss. He was the friend as well as the father of his large family, interesting himself in all their concerns, and has left a very loving memory of his deep and tender affection for each. Only on two occasions did the angel of death cross his door, taking away one of his boys in infancy, and again removing, in 1892, his second son, James, a very promising youth in his eighteenth year. Trials like these, while leaving their scars, tended to mellow and soften the gentle spirit of the father, whose kindness and charity to all became a more marked feature of his character. The passing years brought other changes into the

bright home. Two of the daughters left for homes of their own, followed by their father's loving thoughts, and giving him new happiness in their joy; while his eldest son left to enter on the practice of medicine in the south-west of England. He never forgot the birth-days in the home. These were made the occasions of some little gift, often accompanied with a few lines of verse containing his good wishes. The two pieces that follow were written on the birth-days of two of his daughters.

The family was staying at Dollar when the first of them was written:—

Dollar glen is glad to-day,  
Even the shadowy nooks are gay;  
Myriad singing voices say,  
Welcome happy Nora!

Down the laughing cascades spring,  
Rippling wavelets dance and sing,  
Blythe the birds are on the wing,  
Wishing well to Nora!

Through the leaves the golden rays  
Sweetly harp a song of praise—  
Song of love and happy days,  
Happy days to Nora!

Hark! the music louder swells;  
Fairies from the neighbouring dells,  
Over moors and over fells,  
Come to welcome Nora!

Through the ferns and o'er the grass  
March they on, a merry mass,  
Blue-bells ringing, as they pass,  
Merry chimes for Nora!

Then in bannered troops they cross  
 Over to the velvet moss ;  
 Round their sceptred queen they stand,  
 Listening to her sweet command :

“ Sisters fair, one fair as you,  
 Though of mortal flesh and hue,  
 Loves the fairy sisterhood—  
 Loves the beautiful and good.

Nora is her name on earth,  
 We shall call her artless mirth ;  
 ’Tis our will to grace this day  
 With a gift to last for aye.

Weave a wreath of wisdom’s pearls  
 For her brow beneath the curls ;  
 Then, with cunning goldsmith’s art,  
 Form a locket for her heart.

Make it of the fairest mould,  
 Girt with faultless virgin gold,  
 Set with all the sparkling gems  
 Worn in fadeless diadems.

Put the ring upon her hand,  
 Wearing which she shall command  
 All the wealth of fairyland.

These are our commands, obey !  
 But, before you haste away,  
 Raise your bugles, firm and fast  
 Blow once more a silver blast—

Long live sister Nora !”

In the lines that follow, he alludes to the recent marriage of the daughter whose birth-day he commemorates:—

Heaven’s music led the dawn which saw thy birth,  
 Nature, responsive, sang to heaven’s high dome,  
 When angels brought thee to our waiting home ;  
 Binding us closer to this beauteous earth,

And ever on that bright returning day,  
 One of the seraph choir, who see God's face,  
 Came, gazed on thine with eyes of radiant grace,  
 Fain to have borne thee back his heaven-ward way.

But the Wise Will had service for thee here  
 By lavish gift of sweet harmonious sound,  
 Until another joyous day came round  
 Which drew thee to thy mate—one home to cheer.  
 Peace be within, and angels guard that home !  
 Far distant be the hour when they shall whisper—"Come.

On the anniversary of his marriage, he writes these lines to his wife:—

#### MEMORY.

Fragrance of summer flowers ; a brilliant room,  
 Gay with the festal robes of friend and guest,  
 Greeting each other from the east and west ;  
 A maiden veiled, and crowned with orange bloom,  
 Softly approaching by her father's side :  
 Sweet silence, while there fall the words benign  
 Of prayer and counsel from the Book Divine :  
 Then laid her hand in mine, my own young bride.

#### CONGRATULATION.

Not twenty-one till four days more ran clear,  
 When many a kind wish winged its upward ray,  
 Which heaven has answered. Many a gladsome day  
 And gift of love has come her home to cheer ;  
 As vines in sunny lauds rich clusters bear,  
 Grateful to God and man, even so has spread  
 Her life its tendrils and sweet perfume shed.  
 And now one wish her gathered children share—  
 Long be her days, and every good betide,  
 And so says he who calls her still his bride.

Thus, happy in his home and devoted to his work,  
 Dr Wilson passed quietly through life. There was a  
 rare modesty and reserve about his character, a dislike  
 of all excitement and show, that scarcely did justice

to his many gifts. He never sought popularity. He served his Master with the talents entrusted to him, knowing that He was faithful who had called him. Perhaps it was best for him. For Dr Wilson was not a strong man. He had a slender and delicate frame, often taxed beyond its strength; and yet, with the exception of the breakdown in 1878 and 1879, he was able for the full discharge of his duties almost to the end. In the beginning of the year 1895, he was in his usual health and spirits, and read at the last meeting of the Greek Club, at which he was present, the translation of the fight between Ulysses and Irus already referred to. A slight cold was hanging about him, to which no importance was attached. On Sabbath, February 10th, he was only able to preach in the forenoon; but during the week he had gone out on a very cold and raw evening to attend a meeting of trustees. He returned home exhausted, and was unable for duty on the 17th; still no one thought of danger. It was, however, his last illness. Serious symptoms manifested themselves, and in spite of all that medical skill could do, he quietly passed away on the early morning of Thursday, the 21st February, 1895, in the sixty-third year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his ministry. His work was done; he entered into rest. The news of his death came as a great shock to his friends and to his sorrowing congregation, with regard to whom he could say, in the words of the Apostle, "Ye are in our heart to die and live with you." They filled the church, the scene of his devoted labours, and followed him to his burial in the Necropolis, on the 25th of February. The funeral

services were conducted, for the most part, by the members of the Greek Club, who had so long been associated with Dr Wilson.

On the following Sabbath, Mr Dobbie, of Lansdowne, addressed the sorrowing congregation, in the forenoon, from the words, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19), and paid a warm tribute to the many excellencies of his departed friend; and the writer addressed them from the words of Eliphaz in Job xv. 11, "Are the consolations of God small with thee?" closing with a sketch of his much loved friend, with whom he enjoyed pleasant fellowship for more than twenty years. Kindly testimony was borne by many of Dr Wilson's brethren in the Presbytery to his personal worth and his ministerial devotion; and the following minute, prepared by the Rev. P. Rutherford, of Kelvingrove Church, was placed on the Presbytery's Record:—

"The Presbytery records with deep regret the loss it has sustained in the removal by death of the Rev. Dr Wilson, of Sandyford Church.

"Dr Wilson was one of the most devoted of ministers, as he was one of the most cultured. From the early years of his ministry—a ministry extending over nearly thirty-five years—to its close, he was, in the truest sense, a student and a scholar. He was diligent and painstaking in his preparation for the pulpit, assiduous in his pastoral duties, faithful to both, even to spending himself beyond measure.

"He was a man of strong religious convictions, profoundly impressed with the greatness and majesty of God, and with the reverence due to His name; no less



so with the love of the Father, by the exhibition of which his preaching was distinguished, and by which, shed abroad in his own heart, he lived. To his faith in, and love to, the Lord Jesus Christ, his whole life in every relation bore witness; how holily, justly, and unblameably he behaved himself!

“While regretting the removal from its roll of Dr Wilson’s honoured name, the Presbytery would record its gratitude to the great Head of the Church for his faithful, conscientious ministry, and for the example of his constant Christian walk and conversation.”



Sermons.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in making a selection of sermons for publication from the work of thirty-five years. Dr Wilson seldom used a sermon more than once, re-writing when he did so, and left little or no indication which he considered his best efforts. The choice of the following has been made principally from the recollections of his hearers. For several years Dr Wilson had written his sermons largely in shorthand, and if inaccuracies have crept in they must be attributed to the difficulties of translation.

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## Sermon.

“SING YE TO THE LORD, FOR HE HATH TRIUMPHED GLORIOUSLY:  
THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER HATH HE THROWN INTO THE SEA.”—*Exodus*  
*xv. 21.*

If ever an event deserved to be celebrated in song, it was that wonderful deliverance of the Israelites from the tyranny and vengeance of their enemies; and if ever a song was worthy of the occasion that called it forth, it is that song which swelled forth from the ransomed nation by the shore of the Red Sea. They had passed through a wonderful experience. They had witnessed mercy and judgment in the most signal manner. The waves that opened for *them*, closed in upon and overwhelmed their pursuers. They entered the sea as bondmen fleeing from their taskmasters; they passed out of it a nation of free men. Not one of their number was missing as they mustered by their tribes and families that morning.

It would indeed have been strange had they not given vent to their feelings in music and song. This is nature's universal language; and when the heart is glad, the words almost naturally assume a rhythmical form, and the voice a melodious cadence.

Moses evidently composed this song. It was so constructed that all the people could take part in it.

The opening words seem to have been also the refrain, "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea."

I shall not attempt to comment upon the song, or to analyse it. The simple reading of it is enough to impress one with its sublimity and grandeur. You will observe that it is a true *Te Deum*, praise to God. All the glory of the deliverance is ascribed to Jehovah. It is *His* right hand that has dashed in pieces the enemy. It is with the blast of *His* nostrils that the waters were gathered together in a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. It is His mercy that has led His people forth, whom He had already redeemed.

The poet not only thus sings of the event; he regards it as a token of ultimate victory. The surrounding nations will be panic stricken, and God shall bring His chosen people into their own land. And the Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

There was evidently a strict orderly arrangement in the rendering of the song. The women by themselves took part in it. Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, led them. Accompanying the words was the inspiring sound of the timbrel, and they gave additional effect to the melody by the graceful movements of the body.

It has been remarked that this is the oldest song on record. But its antiquity is not its chief interest. It is a sacred song, composed for and sung by the ancient church at the time of her redemption and institution. And so it bears a typical character. The whole cir-

cumstances are indeed full of significance. The passage of the Red Sea is an emblem of that transition by which God's people pass from a state of nature to a state of grace. You find in the New Testament this event alluded to in connection with baptism. Paul says the children of Israel were baptised into Moses in the sea and in the cloud. They became a new people, as it were, under the guidance of Moses. They had done now with Egypt, its degradation and its bondage, and in their new-born freedom they gave vent to their joy in praise to God. The service of song was thus earlier than the ceremonial law, and therefore has continued in every age of the Church. It is the divinely-appointed means of expressing her united joy and gratitude. A church without praise would seem to be an anomaly. The bond of her existence is the consciousness of her freedom, the memory of her deliverance, gratitude to her Redeemer, faith in His guidance, and the assured hope of an entrance into the promised rest. A common salvation, one faith, one Lord, one glorious hope—these are what unite God's people as a church. And as they cannot meet without praying together, so praise must ever be the natural and necessary expression of their religious feelings. It is evident, then, that the praise of the sanctuary is nothing worth unless it be the utterance of grateful, loving hearts. The first condition of acceptable praise is that it be rendered with the spirit and with the understanding also.

This newly redeemed church in the wilderness swelling forth her jubilant praise by the Red Sea is a type of Christ's church in every age, and points us forward also to that other scene depicted in the Apocalypse,

where the Church triumphant, which had gotten the victory over the beast, stands upon a sea of glass mingled with fire; and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

The service of the Church in heaven is one of continual praise. Not so that of earth. It would almost seem that the Israelites lingered by the scene of their deliverance, as if unwilling to leave it. So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea. They had marchings before them, and something else to do than enjoy their triumph. He led them into the wilderness of Shur. The whole of this district was well known to Moses. For forty years he had dwelt in the land of Midian. It was at Mount Horeb that the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and there he received the commission to go down to Egypt. Along with the commission "it was indicated that the Israelites after their deliverance should render homage to God in that very spot." It was in this direction, therefore, he now leads them. They travelled for three days, and then they began to experience the dreadful sufferings of thirst. No doubt they had taken water with them in their leathern bottles, but as yet they had come to no place where they might get a fresh supply, and now all the water they had was exhausted. We can with difficulty realise



the greatness of their sufferings, we who live in a moist climate and scarcely know what thirst is. They were travelling in the hot, sandy waste, with a burning sun over their heads—men, women, and children—mostly on foot. Then it is to be remembered that they had been accustomed to drink, without stint, of the finest water in the world—the water of the river Nile.

At last, at the end of three days, relief seems at hand. Signs of water appear in the distance in the form of trees and bushes clothed in refreshing green. With quickened steps they move forward, and we can well fancy what a rush there would be to the water. But what a bitter disappointment. Agonised with thirst as they were, yet they could not drink of it, it was so bitter and loathesome. And they murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

Thus was their joy so soon turned to sorrow, and their song of triumph to the wail of despondency. We sometimes meet with a similar experience, severe trial following seasons of great joy. Even the Christian life is not without its painful thirst and bitter waters. Things that promise happiness and comfort are found to be disappointing. The reed on which we lean breaks under us. The more we trust for satisfaction and comfort in the things of time and sense, the truer we shall find this to be. For God means us to find our satisfaction and rest in Himself. He leads us through the hot desert waste of this world that we may come to feel it. Many good things He gives, to minister to our gladness and gratitude. But it is not meant that we should find in them the food of our souls. Wealth and honour, and wisdom and love, and gratified am-

bition, and successful purpose, and whatsoever other good things a man may gather about him and achieve, he may have them all, and yet beyond them all there shall be a great aching, longing vacuity in his soul. His true and inmost being will be groping through the darkness like a plant growing in a cellar for the light which alone can tinge its pale petals, and swell its shrivelling blossoms to ripeness and fruit." Would that we could all learn this in time, that the thirst in man's soul cannot be quenched by the waters of this world. They may seem to be the very thing we want—the very water we are panting for. But the appearance is delusive. It is only of the living water, the water of life which wells out of God's love, and which the Son of God has to give, that it can be said, he that drinketh of it shall never thirst.

Though the people murmured, yet the Lord dealt very tenderly with them. No doubt their complaint was sinful, for they should have trusted in God, who had so recently delivered them from a greater danger, and whose guiding presence in the pillar of cloud had brought them to that very place. Instead of murmuring against Moses, they should have prayed to their divine protector to supply their wants, as He was well able to do.

Yet in consideration of their sufferings God did not, on this occasion, as at other times, reprove them. When Moses cried for help He at once heard and answered, and rendered the waters sweet and pleasant.

But here again, as usual, He wrought by *means*. He showed Moses a tree which, when cast into the spring, took all the bitterness from the waters. The

miracle was thus made the more impressive. The people were taught to feel more directly the almighty and gracious hand of Jehovah.

Travellers have sought for some tree in the neighbourhood possessing this healing or sweetening property. It has been, of course, a vain search. The whole thing was miraculous. "As well might they have searched in the neighbourhood of Jericho for the kind of salt with which Elisha healed the bad waters of the fountain there." There is a tradition among the Jews that this tree was itself bitter, yet it cured the bitterness of Marah's fountain. And in this tradition there is wrapt up another and more significant reference. There is a tree that can take away the bitterness of this world's evils. That tree is the Cross of Christ. God has shown it to us. He points out to you and me, my friends, the only remedy that will sweeten our waters of affliction—a remedy which has never failed, and never will. We have, all of us, ills to bear. The Cross does not take them away; but it can and does give them a new character, a new property. When once we see and bear them in the light of the Cross they become transfigured. From being bitter waters they become sweet.

It is a very precious truth, the power of faith in a crucified Saviour to neutralise the bitterness of trouble and affliction. The secret of that power lies in this, that such faith unites a man to God in the bond of sonship, all sin being cancelled, and a Father's love indwelling and surrounding him. The believer in Christ knows that his condition is one of security. Being freed from condemnation, whatever afflictions he may

have to endure have not this element of bitterness. He knows that they are not the infliction of God's anger. They may be the outcome and fruit of his own sins, and so be the discipline or chastisement from his divine Father; but he knows that they are neither the result of accident nor the judgments of an angry God. He still feels the endearing relationship subsisting. He can still cry, "Father, *my* Father," and lay hold of the Father's loving hand even while his heart is sorrowing. He can use such words as these, rejoicing in tribulation, and singing through his tears—

My song shall be of judgment,  
All-wise and holy God;  
Thou makest all Thy children  
To pass beneath Thy rod.

Thou scourgest whom Thou lovest,  
And, oh! my soul shall tell  
That in Thy heaviest dealings  
Thou doest all things well.

Such a conviction as that must remove the bitterness of affliction. Remove the bitterness! More than that; must sweeten affliction. Else the experience of the Apostle Paul and of millions of Christians is a delusion when they could glory in tribulation, assured that all things work together for good to them that love God. Yes, there is but one thing that can sweeten the waters of Marah—reconciliation and union to God through the cross of His Son. This alone can bring comfort amid all the troubles of life, and peace to the soul when life is closing.

To return to the narrative. At the waters of Marah,

with their hearts impressed with the Lord's goodness God made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them. He put them on their trial. And the terms of the engagement were these:—"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians. For I am the Lord that healeth thee."

We see from the song which they had lately sung that Moses expected they should enter Canaan immediately. He represents the inhabitants as seized with alarm and melting away, and the ransomed of the Lord passing over in easy triumph. And so it would have been, doubtless, had they listened attentively and obeyed with diligence the divine commands. But we know how soon and how grievously they failed, and how their disobedience brought down on them the evils that were threatened.

One or two things are worthy of notice in this transaction; I mean the statute or ordinance by which they were to be proved. Consider it as a means of education. The Israelites were taught that it was sin, disobedience to God's commands, that occasioned all the plagues and disasters which befel the Egyptians; that God is no respecter of persons, the same disobedience will be followed by similar evils to them. They were not to think that because God had chosen them He would tolerate their sin. They were not to think that God hated the Egyptians because they were Egyptians, or destroyed them because they were Egyptians.

They were not to suppose that God had saved them because of their own excellence. Nor must they suppose that because they have been freed from slavery they are their own masters, and may do as they please. The service of Pharaoh is to be exchanged for the service of God. They are reminded of the reasonableness of that service. God had proved Himself to be *their* God.

All this is implied in the language before us. But look at the language itself, for it expresses the obligation under which every one of us is to the God of our Salvation:—"If thou wilt hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord thy God." Notice the attitude. The whole being is on the alert. The eyes are upward, the head forward to catch the faintest sound.

"And do that which is right in His sight." Not what is right in your own eyes, not what you please, not what your fellow-men may approve, but what is right in *God's* sight.

"And give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes;" not *some* of the commandments and statutes only, but all. He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. Universal obedience,—that is what is required of us. But it is not required as the taskmasters in Egypt demanded the tale of bricks. God requires our obedience, not because He needs it, but because *we* need it. The commandments of God are not grievous; they are all the expression of a loving, as of a righteous, Father. Not more our duty than our privilege. Obedience to God is our life, not in the sense that we shall be rewarded for it, but it is the very happiness and satisfaction and peace of the soul. Obedience is the soul's health—"I am the Lord that healeth thee." The great

disease is sin, and the great physician is God. If we are kept well, it is He that keeps us; if we are made well, it is He that restores. He is our life and the length of our days. We have all sickened, but we need not all die. There is healing for us all if we will only have it. There is balm in Gilead, and a physician there.

The chapter closes with the fifth encampment. "And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters."

It must have been a lovely spot; an oasis in the desert; a delightful change from their last halting place. Twelve fountains of water, one for every tribe, sent forth their constant stream; while the vegetation around supplied food to their cattle, and the stately palm trees furnished shade to the pilgrims as well as beauty to the landscape.

Here they seem to have rested a month, or five weeks. How they spent the time we are not told. But it would be a busy, stirring camp.

Such is life, ever changeful. There are many trials, but there are many blessings. Which of us has not at least the memory of some green spot in our history, for which we have still reason to give God thanks?

And let me say this one word to the young people. You have reason to thank God and to love Him. Most of you are encamping at Elim just now. It is a happy time and a pleasant spot in your life. You are in your father's house; your brothers and sisters around you. But by-and-by you will have to leave it. Brothers and sisters will separate; fathers and mothers

will grow old and pass away. It is sad to think of it, but I do not say it to make you sad. I say it that you may prize your privileges, that you may obey your parents, and be affectionate to brothers and sisters now, while they are beside you, and that you may love and serve God, so that when you are done with the pilgrimage of this world you may be taken to the heavenly Canaan, where lost friends shall be found again, and there will be happiness and life everlasting.



## Sermon.

“THINE EYES SHALL SEE THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY; THEY SHALL BEHOLD THE LAND THAT IS VERY FAR OFF.”—*Is. xxviii. 17.*

LONG years ago, when the Missionaries of the Cross came to England, we read in the history that the wise men of Northumbria gathered together to deliberate on the new faith. King Edwine, whose wife was already a Christian, presided. One of the aged counsellors, or Ealdormen, as they were called, arose and said—“So seems the life of man, O king, as a *sparrow's flight* through the hall (when you are sitting at meat in winter-tide), with the warm fire lighted on the hearth, but the icy rain-storm without. The sparrow flies in at one door (and tarries for a moment in the light and heat of the hearth-fire), and then flying forth from the other, vanishes into the wintry darkness whence it came. So tarries for a moment the life of man in our sight; but what is before it, what after it, we know not. If this new teaching tells us aught certainly of this let us follow it.”

So the new faith came to lighten the darkness of our forefathers on the great question of our destiny beyond the grave. All that their wise men, or the wise men of all ages, could say was the life of man tarries for a moment in our sight. But what is before

and what after we know not. We can suppose them singing sadly—

And do we go just as we came,  
Like wandered bird in hasty flight ;  
From night, through lighted hall, to night—  
Are birth and death to us the same ?

Into this world we nothing brought,  
And going hence we nothing take ;  
Must we then every good forsake,  
And end as we began—with nought ?

The new faith came to them and to us with a glorious answer—

We do not go just as we came—  
This palace-hall of brilliant light  
Hath wakened thoughts, by things of sight,  
Which burn with an undying flame.

Love's glancing eyes have met our own,  
And wakened love within the breast ;  
And hope near by hath built her nest—  
The pledge of life still larger grown.

Soft on the ear, like angel strains,  
A word has fallen that whispers faith ;  
That passing outward is not death,  
But only flight to higher gains.

Yes, a word has fallen on the ear, like the music of heaven, the word of Christ, who has brought *life* and *immortality* to light. "In my Father's house are many mansions." "He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die." "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."

The glorified Redeemer in person and the inheritance of the saints. These are what our eyes shall behold and

enjoy, and what more *can* we desire? These shall fill our whole being, satisfy every want, and meet every craving of our nature.

The King in His beauty. To-day we have been looking back to His manifestation in the flesh, seeing Him in His humiliation. We see His face marred more than the sons of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, crowned with thorns and nailed to the cross. But the time is coming when we shall see Him as He is—

The head that once was crowned with thorns,  
Is crowned with glory now ;  
A royal diadem adorns  
The Mighty Victor's brow.

We shall see Him as He is. At the present time we cannot even imagine the glory of the Redeemer. The vision which the seer of Patmos beheld does not express all the beauty. For of Christ Himself, as well as of heaven, it is true that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." The best of Christians, doubtless, form an imperfect picture of Christ in their hearts. They see Him, but not as He is. Some features they exaggerate, and some they fail to catch. Our own imperfection may distort the beauty of the Son of God. Ah! surely it has been so, else why the wrangling and strife and bitter contentions about the mind of Christ among those who really love and adore Him? They have not seen Him as He is. The mists of ignorance and prejudice have arisen between them and Him. But by-and-by the mists shall be cleared away, and all the family of God—all who

have been washed in the blood of the Lamb—shall see the King in His beauty.

With such a future before us, how tenderly we should deal with each other here. Our own experience is not to measure that of all other Christians. All minds do not see alike, nor do all hearts feel alike. Others may see what we do not see. Let it be a joy to us if they love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and show in any degree the spirit of the Master. By-and-by the defective views in them and us will be corrected, and we shall discover that what kept us separate on earth, and raised up barriers of evil names, was that we did not see Christ as He is. To see the King in His beauty is the consummation of the Christian's blessedness, the realisation of his highest hopes, the perfecting of his life. In the meantime we are to live by faith. It was expedient that Christ should go away even from those who had seen Him in the flesh. It is expedient for us that we do not see Him now. We have a battle to fight that needs the trial of our faith. But most assuredly the life we live here by faith is not complete until it issues in the meeting face to face with the Lord. The Christian life has this future wrapped up or involved in it as surely as the bud contains the flower. All that makes up life—love, hope, joy—points to a personal meeting with the Lord. We cannot conceive of a life such as the Christian's remaining for ever in its present condition, with a love that should never see its object, a hope that is never fulfilled, a joy only in anticipation. The very centre of the Christian's life, the soul of his soul, is Christ. From the time that

the Son of God has been revealed in him he passes on from stage to stage of his journey in spiritual communion with Him, amid the darkness and the sunshine, ever consulting Him, keeping the Lord ever before him. Can it be that the journey ends only in darkness? No, Christ in us is the hope of glory. Present faith will merge in sight, and hope will find what is hoped for, and love will behold the King in His beauty. "Thine *eyes* shall see." We need not touch on the mystery of the how. "Behold I show you a mystery," says the apostle. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound." But will there be no sight of Christ till the resurrection? Does not Christ himself answer that question. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." To be present with the Lord is to see His face and to behold His glory. It is what the apostle longed for; what all true Christians long for. And though we cannot explain the mode of the vision, the promise will be fulfilled. "Thine *eyes* shall see the King in His beauty." The eyes of this mortal body shall grow dim, and shall close at length on all the sights of earth. But the faculty of vision will not be lost. There is a spiritual body as well as a natural, and "when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved we have a building of God—a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

No sweeter sound than this can fall on the Christian's ear. Better and sweeter than to be told of honour and wealth, or even of undying fame. He would not exchange this hope for all that earth can give, and to

have it realised he is willing to go through any suffering or shame or hardship, reckoning, as he does, that the suffering of this present time is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. You have read, perhaps, of the joy of men who have been permitted to wander through the ruins of ancient Rome, the mistress of the world. As they walked along the Via Sacra, and beheld on right and left temples and triumphal arches, they have felt as in a dream as the heroes of their boyish days seemed to pass before them. You have read of even a more sacred joy of men who have been permitted to visit the very scenes where Jesus (God manifest in the flesh) walked and spoke, and suffered and died. Here was the spot where He rested by Jacob's well, and spoke to the woman of Samaria of the water of life which the Son of Man should give. There was the spot where He fed the many thousands miraculously, who followed Him from all quarters to hear His wonderful words of life. Here is the garden where He fell on His face and cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and this is the spot of ground, of all the places on earth most sacred, the place called Calvary, where the Lord was crucified. With what a solemn joy have men traversed these scenes. And what will it be when the Christian, whose sins have been washed away in that precious blood, shall see face to face the very Lord who died for him?

O joy, all joys beyond,  
To see the Lamb who died,  
And count each sacred wound  
In hands and feet and side,

To give to Him the praise  
 Of every triumph won,  
 And sing through endless days  
 The great things He hath done.

Now, when shall we see the land that is very far off? Heaven is far, and yet it is near. One step takes the Christian into its glory, and yet it is so far away we cannot see a single star in all its firmament. You have walked out, perhaps, into the park some morning in the month of October. A cold, white mist was all around you. Nothing could be seen but a few steps of the ground at your feet. But you know there is the grand building away up there on the top of the hill. You cannot see it. A stranger would never suspect its existence. But it is there. There needs only the mist to rise, and there it stands visible in fair proportions in the sunshine. Such is the land that is very far off—near us, but the mists of this present time and this mortal flesh conceal it from the view. But it is there, and by-and-by, Christian, thine eyes shall behold it in all its beauty.

They stand, those walls of Zion,  
 Conjubilant with song,  
 And bright with many an angel,  
 And all the martyr throng.  
 The Prince is ever in them,  
 The daylight is serene,  
 The pastures of the blessed  
 Are decked in glorious sheen.

But while it is a far-stretching land (a land of distances, as it is rendered in the margin of the Bible), it is a blessed home, the Father's house of many mansions, where we shall meet and mingle with those who, like ourselves, have been washed in the blood of the Lamb,

who have been redeemed from every kindred and people and nation and tongue. To *behold* that land is to enter and possess it for ever. Moses brought the children of Israel from Egypt to the border of the promised land. They were allowed to enter, but not himself. From the mountain summit he was permitted only to see it afar off. It is not such a view that we shall get. The fair country our eyes shall behold we shall enter and possess for ever. We shall go no more out. The days of our pilgrimage will be ended, the toil and the weariness, the fightings and struggles, the doubting and fears will be over for ever.

There is no grief in heaven,  
For life is one glad day,  
And tears are of those former things  
Which all have passed away.

There is no death in heaven,  
For they who gain that shore  
Have won their immortality,  
And they can die no more.

O you Christian brethren who are at present passing through the dark cloud of sorrow, look up, do not despond, your eyes shall behold the land that is very far off. It is worth all the suffering and sorrow here. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal, weight of glory. What is it that causes you sorrow? Is it the memory of dear voices now silent, of a strong, loving hand now vanished? Ah, death is cruel, you say; it has made your home so empty and your heart so sad. But is it so? Death is only God's messenger, and he comes in love, from our Father in



heaven, to take to Himself His own, to put them in possession of the blessed inheritance. And you will meet them again. They say that in dreams you may see faces and forms, but never hear the voice. But heaven is no dream. We shall both see the face of our loved ones and hear their well-known voice. We shall meet them again in the Father's house, without a flaw and without a fault, filled with love and bright with glory.

What is it that causes you sorrow? It may be something you cannot name. A dark, black shadow is haunting your steps wherever you go. Is it so? If you have brought that grief to Christ, He will not only give you His own grace to bear it, but in a way you do not know, and cannot now imagine, He will turn your grief into gladness by-and-by. There is no grief in heaven, God shall wipe all tears away. This is the destiny of those who have been worthily commemorating the death of Christ to-day. Thine eyes shall behold the land that is very far off. It is no vain hope, no sweet delusion. "In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you." I, who am the Way, and the Truth, and Life, would have told you if your hope were only a dream. But it is no dream. "I go to prepare a place for you, and will come again to receive you to myself." He will come in His own time, and when we are ready. For He prepares His people for the place, as well as the place for His people. The discipline may be sharp. But we may trust His wisdom; we may trust His love. The things that we fancy to be against us are the things that work in our favour, as it was with

the old patriarch who bitterly mourned the loss of his son, and as we are assured "All things work together for good to those that love God."

We are simply travellers through this world. It is a beautiful world; but it is full of graves, and it is not our home. We cannot stay here though we would; and the Christian would not stay though he could. He has a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. And his desire shall be satisfied when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved.

## Sermon.

“HE HATH SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKEN-HEARTED.”—*Luke iv. 18.*

THESE words are a portion of the reading lesson appointed for that day in the Synagogue in Nazareth. The Scripture was from the prophecies of Isaiah, and Jesus Himself was the reader. It was a coincidence, not of chance but of Providence, that the prophetic announcement and description of the Messianic mission should have been read in the ordinary course by Him in whom it was fulfilled. When He closed the book, and handed it back to the attendant, He sat down. And as all eyes were fastened on Him, waiting His exposition, He began to say—His first words were—“This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” This very first word must have startled His audience. Often as they heard this lesson read, it had never been followed by such a declaration. The glowing and glorious descriptions of the coming Messiah in the prophets and in the Psalms had come to be listened to as a visionary dream; all very true, no doubt, but not likely to be realised in their time. Yet, can they believe their ears? Here is one who tells them that this prophecy is now fulfilled. And He speaks with power, for “all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.”

Observe, Christ does not appear on the scene as an ordinary man, with care and diligence trying to find out what His special work in the world is. His place is assigned to Him long ages ago, and He falls into it of His own accord, with perfect self-consciousness. "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted." He knew whence He came, and He knew what He had to do; and to that work He set Himself from the beginning, and kept it steadily before Him to the end.

How are we to understand this mission of Christ? What is its nature, its extent, and its method? There have not been wanting in the course of history men who recognised it as their duty to do what they could to lessen human suffering. Impressed and grieved with the dire effects of selfish injustice and unregulated passions, they have assumed it as their life-work to instruct the people they met in the principles of truth and equity. They have seen that virtue is the sole foundation of happiness and well-being, and have devoted their lives to teach and enforce it.

Are we to rank Jesus of Nazareth among those rare examples of philanthropic philosophers? When He applied to Himself the Messianic prediction, and declared that God had sent Him to heal the broken-hearted; when He uttered the words, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest," does He mean no more than to tell those within hearing that He is a teacher of morals, and that the morality He teaches would cure their miseries, heal their broken hearts? We have not so learned Christ. We remember that He almost never separates His doctrine from Himself. "Without me ye can do

nothing." Pure morality apart from Him is a fiction. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Christianity is not a system of ethics. It is a life in Christ. The personality of Christ pervades it, and accordingly the text speaks of a personal relation which Christ sustains to the suffering children of men. "God hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted." "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

True, He has the words of eternal life. But it is no less true that He Himself *is* the Word of God. Therefore His words are Spirit and they are Life. It is not doctrine apart from Himself, but Himself in the doctrine that brings life and blessing. At the same time, it is not by any revelation of Christ, vision or dream, apart from His teaching, independent of His truth, that the soul is quickened and blessed. And so He is telling His people, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Thus will His personal presence and power be known, and His mission be fully accomplished. We have no reason to believe in a Christ outwith the Gospel, or that the evils of the world will ever be destroyed by the mere exhibition of the truth; He Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

These remarks will help to explain the nature, extent, and limit of Christ's mission into the world. Whatever be its scope and purpose, it is intimately connected with the person of Jesus. If we think of it as deliverance from sin, it is He Himself that effects that deliverance. "He bore our sins." "He shall save His people from their sins." If we think of it as the restoration of the soul to union with God, it is He

Himself who effects that union. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." If we think of it as escape from the power of death, it is He Himself who gives that freedom. "I am the resurrection and the life."

And so with the subject before us. If the weary and heavy laden are to find rest, if the broken-hearted are to be healed, it is Christ Himself who is to do it. It is not merely by the knowledge of the truth; it is not by speculation on the nature of God and the wonders of His love. It is not even by a general belief in the divine promises. But it is by personal faith in the Son of God; it is by the opening of the heart to His incoming. While this condition of faith may appear to be a limiting of Christ's power, it is a limit which He Himself lays down, and at the same time it discloses the universal reach of His mission. For all things are possible to him that believeth. There is not one of that great family, the sorrowing sons of men, but may find healing and rest, as truly as any sinner may obtain forgiveness, if he only will comply with the conditions. There is no peculiarity of circumstance, and no depth of anguish beyond the range of His knowledge and power. We may call up in thought and try as we please to picture to ourselves the sorrows of mankind. The broken-hearted are found wherever hearts are found, among all peoples and nations and tongues. Pain and sorrow are the lot of high and low, rich and poor alike. There are widows on the throne, and there are orphans on the street. There are slaves dragging their chains away on the steppes of Tartary and in the jungles of Africa;

and there are in our land pale toilers in garret and cellar forced beyond their strength, and yet, with all their labour, doomed to see their children pining for want. The broken-hearted! They are not far to seek. Some, because the world has gone against them. They have spent their strength and made nothing. And now they are weak and old and poor, without hope, and, alas, without God. Some sit in a desolate home, more desolate than the widow's indeed, watching and anxious for the absent one, yet afraid of his coming home. Some are in prison, with the brand of crime upon them; the memory of early days misspent, of kindly influence despised, mocking them for their folly; hard labour and shame their portion—the fruit of their own doing—and no hope here or hereafter. The broken-hearted! We do not need to excite the imagination. We all know what it means. There is no one of experience so limited as not to have seen around him the manifold evidence of bleeding, broken hearts. Perhaps there are among us here to-day some of the children of sorrow. The heart knoweth its own bitterness. Some, like Rachel, are weeping for their children, and will not be comforted because they are not. Some, perhaps, are lamenting the untimely death of a misled but beloved child, and crying, like David, “O Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!” Ah, there are hairs grey with grief as well as with age, and slow steps that might be light but for the heavy heart within. There may be broken-hearted ones here to-day. May God grant they may find the healing they need.

But is there healing for the broken-hearted? Well, Christ says God sent Him into the world for this purpose. Can He do it? Has He done it? Will He do it now? As He uttered the words, did He comprehend their full significance? Did His spiritual vision take in the whole of human history? Were there hidden springs of misery He did not take account of? Even as it has been asked in regard to His general mission, was it not possible that conditions of human society might emerge in the future, calling for a remedy other than He had then to announce? Was His mission final and exhaustive? We hear it sometimes said, if Christ had lived in our day He would have said or done this or that which we do not find in the record of His life in the Gospels. It is said He would have identified Himself with this or that social or philanthropic movement familiar to us in these later times. As if there were no slavery, and no social wrongs, and no licentiousness, and no intemperance in His day; or as if He did not anticipate the full effects of human depravity in the future ages. We cannot bring ourselves to think so of Him who said, "Before Abraham was I am," and declared Himself to be Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last. We believe that His work in substance was accomplished when He cried on the cross, "It is finished," and that we have all the truth the world needs for its regeneration, in His sayings recorded by those who heard Him, and who were inspired by His own spirit.

We may be allowed to say in passing that those who speak in the way referred to seem to forget that



Christ came to set up the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. He acknowledged no morality apart from religion. Man's true relation is a personal one to God as a person. Man must be brought into union and harmony with God. There is no salvation otherwise; this and nothing else is salvation. Jesus knew who and whence He was, whither He came, and what the world needed. The kingdom He set up (which is His Church in the true sense of the word) is the instrument of His power, by the agency of His spirit, for bringing the world to God, and so to alleviate all its miseries. Its mission is to preach the Gospel to every creature. And it must so preach it as to exclude the idea of any other remedy, that there is any other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved. It must so preach it as to make it evident that the Church itself is a great society or community in which alone are conserved the principles of love to God and love to man, pure morality and true philanthropy. No, if Christ had lived in our day He would not have changed His words nor altered His plan. It is the heart in its relation to God that must be put right. We must work from the centre outwards, as God does in nature and everywhere. Only they who so work have any hope of success. In Christ all fulness dwells.

Even so when he said, "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted," He had before Him every form and cause of wretchedness that the heart of man could feel, and He meant to claim for Himself the healing power of rest and comfort in every case, without exception, submitting itself to His infinite compassion. No

one may say or think that Christ's words do not apply to his peculiar grief; that such a case as his was never contemplated in the scheme of redemption. Such a thought is forgetting who the Redeemer is. You forget who made the human heart. There are a thousand things, you say, that make you wretched which the world would only laugh at were you to utter them; or there are memories of the past you cannot get rid of which you may not tell to a living being without adding to your misery. Your heart is sad from disappointment, slighted love and broken vows. You think, perhaps, these things are beyond the Saviour's notice; there is no cure for your condition. There, exactly, is the mistake of many. He can heal the broken-hearted. He can speak the word of peace. He can satisfy the soul with His own presence, and take all the bitterness and regret away.

Or some have found the dream of their youth a delusion, the aspirations and hopes with which they started life disappointed. They trusted men were sincere, and have found them selfish. Trouble came, and their friends fled. They have come to look at all the world as a hollow pretence, vanity and vexation of spirit. Their bitterness increased by the suspicion that they themselves are as bad as the world, the treatment they received only reflecting that which they gave. Think you Christ does not know what you feel? Or would spurn you if you came to Him, or could not sweeten the bitter spring within you?

Some are miserable, they know not why. It is not from the want of worldly means, nor yet the want of friends. It is not from the want of occupation or

business to engage them, or pleasures in abundance. Yet many a night they retire to bed, but not to rest, wretched. There is nothing new or peculiar in that experience. Though they cannot tell the cause, we can mention it with absolute certainty. They have not yielded themselves to God. Christ knows their state, and to such He says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." He will supply the one thing they need. He will show unto them the Father.

Yes, no matter what may be the cause or occasion of the heart's trouble, no matter whether acutely painful or only ill at ease, Christ's mission covers it. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted." We do not profess to know the method of His working in every case. But we believe that never an anxious heart came to Him seeking rest and was sent away unheeded or unsatisfied. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

But the condition must be complied with, and surely that is reasonable. Weary hearts are weary still, because they will not come to Him. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." He will work the miracle of His grace if we only believe. His is a heart of infinite love and compassion, longing to impart to us the very thing we need. "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man will open the door I will come unto him and will sup with him and he with me." His presence will make up for the want of aught else. He does not want us to purify ourselves, or do anything first, but bring our broken hearts to Him. If we do that, He will heal them.

And He will do more than we asked. He will let us see His pierced side, and feel the love wherewith He loved us from the beginning of time. And we shall learn that the cause of all our sorrow and unrest was the sin of our estrangement from God, and that being brought back to Him and becoming acquainted with Him is the secret of our peace. We shall know the meaning of His own parable of the son arising and going to his father, and finding a welcome he never deserved, and, better than he expected, a welcome into a home from which he will never seek to wander more.

My friends, if any of you have not found peace, the reason is that you have not fully given yourselves to the Lord. I say this not in the way of reproach or rebuke, but in way of encouragement, because the great blessing your souls need may be yours in reality. "He hath sent me," says the son of God, "to heal the broken-hearted." "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

## Sermon.

“BUT WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM; FOR HE THAT COMETH TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT HE IS, AND THAT HE IS A REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.”—*Heb. xi. 6.*

It is said that the Greek peasant still hears at midnight the noise of war: the prancing of the steed, the rattling of the chariot, and the clashing of armour; the spirits of the ancient warriors who fought and fell at Marathon. It is the ear of fancy, quickened by patriotism and poetry, that peoples again the battlefield with the heroes of liberty, and fills the air with their martial sounds. By a little exercise of the same fancy, who, as he reads the chapter before us, does not see pass along a host of nobler spirits who fought and suffered for a fairer kingdom than earth has seen, and on whose banners we read, in letters of gold, the word that nerved their arm and gave them the victory, not genius, not martial heroism, but *faith*? Second in order as they move along we behold Enoch, the light of heaven in his eye, the crown of victory on his brow, and arrayed in a garment of purest white, which he lays not aside when the strife is over, but which seems to brighten as it thickens, till on a sudden we see him standing among the angels of God. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. Among the various results in this chapter ascribed to faith, there is none more remarkable than those in the case

of Enoch, the friendship of God and the complete conquest of death. And after all we need not be surprised at the wonderful character of his achievements when we consider its nature, and the important part which it performs even in ordinary life.

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for,” says the apostle, “the evidence of things not seen.” “If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed,” says the Saviour, “ye should say unto this mountain remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Faith is the essential principle of active life. In faith “the merchant ploughs the main, the farmer ploughs the manor,” and every great enterprise has its origin and first step in faith. In faith Columbus, compass in hand and firmly relying on its revelations, traversed in his frail bark the wide waters of the unknown ocean and discovered the new world. Even in a secular sense “this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

But it is in the sphere of religion that we see its true grandeur. It lays hold of the invisible as if it were seen, and brings the distant near. The man of faith lives as if in the presence of God, and so becomes strong for duty and trial, for doing and suffering. This was Enoch’s faith.

There are three things to which I invite your attention. They were the objects of Enoch’s faith:—

- I. That God exists.
- II. That God may be sought and found.
- III. That God will reward them that diligently seek Him.

I. God exists. There are few professed atheists in the world. It is the *fool* that hath said in his heart there is no God. There are some, indeed, who profess agnosticism, who fail, as they say, to discover evidence for the being of a personal God. But after all they are the few, and ever will be the few. As humanity is constituted, even the material universe will always convince the majority of mankind that beneath and above it there is a great intelligence and power whom we call God. "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." Looking at the works of nature, and regarding the order of beauty pervading them all, most men are constrained to believe in a great first cause. There are few who do not see in the unnumbered stars of heaven the architecture of Omnipotence; who do not perceive in the geometry of an insect's cell the wisdom and skill of the "Great Geometer that made the bee."

The existence of God is the keystone of the arch of all truth, the foundation of all knowledge. It makes the universe what its meaning imports—a whole. It gives man's life a meaning, virtue a motive, and hope strength to work and wait. Still a man may admit that there is a God, and be destitute of that faith which Enoch had. How many, among the various churches of Christendom, repeat every Lord's Day this first item of their creed, "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," who neither walk with God nor please Him.

True faith in God is more than a merely intellectual assent to the truth of His existence. It is a felt sense of His presence with us: ever near us, not far from every one of us, encompassing our path and our lying down, and acquainted with all our ways. This is such a consciousness of His presence as shall call forth those sentiments and emotions which it is impossible to bestow on an intellectual abstraction.

Without this faith it is impossible to please God. It matters not that we confess His existence as an intuitive necessity, and even at stated times offer Him the homage of expressed devotion, unless we feel Him ever near us, walk as in the company of the invisible God, and allow that presence to influence our thoughts and feelings and actions. Nor is this impossible. God is invisible, it is true. But faith does not depend on sight. We do not love our friend because we see him. It is not the grasp of the hand or the glance of the eye that constitutes friendship. These we all know are but the symbols of the invisible power we call love. It is in the highest degree reasonable to believe in and trust the God whom we have not seen. For it is absolute perfection—the true, the beautiful, and the good met together in One whom we can call Father and Friend.

Have we such faith in God's existence? we may well ask. Is God in all our thoughts? Do we pursue all our business and all our pleasures under the influence of His presence and blessing? Ah! then our whole life would be an expression of thanksgiving and praise. Every day that brightens over us would bring us proofs



of our Father's love. Not morning and evening only would see the incense of our heart's devotion rising heavenward; not before and after meat only would an expression of thanksgiving escape our lips. We should see all around us the marks of infinite goodness, and our gratitude, the reflection of God's love, would flow forth from us in a life of holiness and peace and joy.

II. God may be sought. This may be called a corollary or consequence of the preceding. The one is the practical result of the other. We cannot believe that God exists in His ever present and infinite love for us without believing also that we exist for Him. The one relation implies the other. If God is our Father, then we are His children, and we shall seek Him as our Father. If God is our Redeemer, then we shall seek Him as our Saviour.

Now this faith must be an ever-active power working in the present life and producing its legitimate results. It will have its sphere in the present life. Man need not die in order to find God. No doubt that event will be an important step in our progress towards a knowledge of Him. But we must seek Him here, else we shall not find Him as a friend on the other side of the grave. It was in this life that Enoch sought God and walked with God. And in so doing he fulfilled the true end of his being. Man's nature is such that he is always seeking, searching; and all experience has shown that nothing but the Infinite God Himself, can satisfy him or yield him true happiness.

This world was indeed made for man, and in it he was intended to find happiness. Man was not made

to mourn, as our poet has sung. All nature without us, and the depths of our spirits within us, refute the assertion. The blue heavens smiling down on golden fields, the song of the birds and sparkling streams, the soft, green meadows and sweet incense of flowers, the lofty mountains, wrapping their grey heads in clouds or rearing their icy needle-points to glitter in the sun, the broad ocean, always sublime, whether in storm or in calm, were all made for man's delight. But whatever pleasure these may yield him, they cannot satisfy him. While the world was made for man, man was made for God. And for man to live without God is to live without life, like a flower without sunshine or a tree without a root.

But God is a Spirit, how shall we seek Him, or seeking, find Him? Is not God unsearchable? Who can by searching find out God? In answer, I remark that God is to be sought in the revelation of Himself which He has given. That revelation is threefold. God has revealed Himself in His works, in the human conscience, and in His written word; but most clearly in this last. The very fact that a written revelation has been given proves that the other two were inadequate. Much may indeed be learned of God from nature. The heavens declare the glory of God. But the sky shone as brightly, the sun rose and set with as rich a glory, and the stars sparkled as big and clearly before Noah laid a beam of the ark, as ever they have done since the Saviour came, and yet the men of the old world were without God. They found Him not in nature. The earth showeth God's handiwork; but the

men of Sodom and Gomorrah were surrounded with as lovely scenes as ever men have witnessed, and yet they saw not God's finger in all that they beheld. They found neither "sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, nor good in anything." Glorious as nature is, and important as is conscience, "we have a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." Here we discover the heart of God. Here we find Him declaring His name—the Lord God, merciful and gracious. Here we find God manifest in the flesh. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Have you sought? Has your faith in His existence led you to seek Him? You have searched after many things. You have sought knowledge and wealth, and pleasure and friendship. Have you sought God? *How* have we done so? *Where* have we gone? Many seek God in nature, and are content with what is there revealed of Him. Some seek Him in their own inner nature, the inner light as they call it, and are content with that. Alas! nature and conscience alone are terrible things to the guilty man. Nature reveals a God of power, conscience reveals our guilt. There is no hope, no peace for sinful men in that direction. But God in Christ loving the sinner, Christ's blood cleansing the sinner—that is news, that is the Gospel!

Have you sought God at the cross? Flee there, and falling down before it, and raising your eyes to the dying Saviour, say, "My Lord and my God!" And then your Father on high will be pleased with your

faith, and you will be translated to a heaven upon earth, you will pass from death unto life.

III. God will reward them that diligently seek Him. This phrase, though often applied to God as the hearer of prayer, has a far wider significance. Since a reward is offered, none can be adequate which would exclude God Himself.

Those who diligently seek God will be rewarded with Himself. They will be made partakers of the Divine nature, and this will include within it, even as the seed does the beautiful tints of the flower, peace and safety—the peace of God that passeth all understanding, and that safety indicated by the apostle when he says, “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” They who seek God will become partakers of the Divine nature. What do we mean by this? A consideration of some of the Scripture characters might show us. Enoch sought God, and was so rewarded. By nature he was a child of wrath even as others. But God had by His grace saved him through faith. We are not told explicitly of the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit on his soul, but the short notices of his life that we have read in the light of Bible teaching, imply that great change which brought him into the family of God and into communion with God Himself.

And this change showed itself in his character. While all around was corruption or death, he possessed life and vigour, which drew their nourishment from

heaven. He had his will in harmony with the will of God. Licentiousness and sin, violence and unbelief, might surge around him like a sea. Faith in God's existence was the rock on which he firmly stood. Son of God as he was, he showed himself possessed of the nature of his Divine Father, and at every stand he made on behalf of God and righteousness he obtained additional moral strength. His was the reward, "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." Now this reward was not confined to patriarchal times. It is the reward of all who seek God now, as it was of those who sought Him then. The power of transforming the sons of men into the children of God is still working. The family of God is still being filled up from among the children of men. Only let us seek the privilege and it is ours. Such a faith is pleasing to God.

But they that diligently seek God will be rewarded with peace, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding. How true is the declaration of Scripture, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Look around upon the world and see one, amid its countless votaries, who enjoys peace. In the lowest ranks of life, where humble fare and homely dress prevail, do you find peace among the ungodly? Is it not rather, in one quarter, strife, rioting, intemperance, and in another, sullen discontent and misery you meet with instead? In the middle ranks of society, where neither poverty nor riches might be thought to foster the highest happiness, do you find peace? Is it not too often harassing anxiety, feverish competition in business, hasting to be rich, cankering care eating out the very soul, that you

meet with instead ? Nor yet, as you ascend still higher the social scale, where wealth can bring from the world's end all luxuries, where every sense is gratified and every wish obeyed, not amid the halls of splendour and gardens of delight do you find peace and true happiness among the ungodly. Listen to the confession of one who was the most illustrious of kings as well as the wisest of men ; but not the pious sentimentalist, but the royal experimentalist, the inductive philosopher. "Also He hath set the world in their heart ; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." No, nowhere out of God will you find peace. But seek Him, find in Him a friend, and it is yours. No matter in what station your lot may be cast, whether you eat the crust of poverty or abound in this world's goods, you can rely with perfect confidence in Him who feeds the ravens when they cry, and without whom not a sparrow falls. You may not be free from suffering and trial, but even in the midst of affliction you will have the company of God, even as the three Hebrew youths who were thrown into the roaring furnace were seen attended by "one like unto the Son of man." Yes, the peace of God, like the Saviour on the troubled waves of Gennesaret, will rest on your soul even in distress. In life you may beg your bread like Lazarus at the rich man's gate, and you may die like Stephen at the hands of an infuriated mob, still yours will be that peace which the world cannot give, and which the world cannot take away.

But they that diligently seek God will be rewarded with safety. Nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God. This was pre-eminently Enoch's

reward. There is a tradition that on account of his pure life and faithful reproof of the sins of his time, Enoch was violently assailed by his enemies, who thirsted for his blood. But at this juncture God Himself interfered, and rescued him from them. For when they entered the tent the man of God was not to be found. God had translated him that he should not see death. It was a wonderful deliverance, deliverance from temporal death. But greater still will be that of every one who seeks and finds God in Christ. Deliverance from spiritual and eternal death. What that means we cannot tell. The redeemed in glory and the lost in the place of woe—they know what it means. And one day we also shall know. When sickness lays us prostrate, when death draws near and lays his chilling hand upon us, when this world is fading from our sight and all its past business and pleasures seem as but a dream, when we enter the valley of the shadow of death, alone, then we shall know the greatness of the safety of those who have put their trust in God and sought His favour as their life. To the weary and footsore traveller, overtaken by night in a barren region, with danger around and fear within and a storm brewing overhead, how sweet, how welcome the inn or sheltering cottage. To the wet and trembling sailor drifting away on a wide, watery waste in a frail and tossing raft, the gray sky growing dark above him, the treacherous waves heaving around him, and hunger and cold benumbing every limb, how sweet, how welcome is the sail in sight that comes bounding to the rescue. But sweeter far, and still more welcome, will be the deliverance of God's people on that day when "the heavens shall pass away

with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," when the great white throne shall be set, and all that have ever lived shall be judged by Him who sits on it.

In conclusion, I would remind you that there are two ways of living on earth. You may live by faith, or you may live by sight. You may look forward to immortality and a kingdom in heaven, or you may content yourselves with threescore years and ten, and riches and comfort on earth. Choose ye this day which is the wiser, which the happier, which the safer course. Ask yourselves once more in your life for what end you were made? Was it to eat, drink, take your pleasure, gather together some riches for you know not whom? Was it to exhaust your energy of body and mind to amass a fortune or make a name in the world, to strut up and down the stage of this world to attract the eye and entertain your fellows with a short scene of folly, and then descend to the grave and never be heard of more? Was it for this that God made man in His own image and redeemed him with the blood of His Son? If, on the other hand, you recognise the superiority of the life of faith, if you acknowledge the dignity of your nature, God as your father, heaven as your home, then your character and conduct will correspond. The old Roman trod the soil of sunny Italy with the conscious gait of one who had conquered the world. So, methinks, the Christian whose citizenship is in heaven, should walk this earth with the elastic step of an heir of heaven, his eye bright with the light that never was on sea or shore, his ear listening to a music which the world cannot hear, and his hand clasping, child-like, the hand of his Father God.



## Sermon.

“AND, SITTING DOWN, THEY WATCHED HIM THERE.—*Matt. xxvii. 36.*

WE are called to-day, in a special manner, to commemorate the death of Christ, and these words I have read may serve to guide us in our meditation on the great theme. They carry us back to the memorable day of the crucifixion, the most eventful, perhaps, that ever dawned on our earth.

I need not repeat the details leading up to the tragic hour when the Son of God was nailed to the cross. You are familiar with all the circumstances of the betrayal, the agony in the garden, the mock trial before the high priest, the delivery to Pilate the Roman governor, who, against his will, passed sentence of condemnation; the immediate and hurried passage to the place of execution, the crowds accompanying, some shouting in derision, some weeping in sympathy; the sinking under the cross by the way, the arrival at Golgotha, where all the grim implements of death were waiting: the massive wooden cross and the nails, and the soldiers with their spears, who soon performed their cruel work. And now, when it was done, they sat down and watched Him there, with little concern at first, glad only that it was over, and all that they had to do now was to watch. They must remain at their post to the end, but it was an easy thing to keep

guard over a dying man. They could do it as they sat and gambled for their share of the perquisites—the raiment of the victim. “Sitting down, they watched Him there.” So we to-day take our place at the foot of the cross with these Roman soldiers, and watch Him there. Let us think for a little of the spectators of that scene. For while it is the Roman guards that are specially referred to in the text, it may be worth our while to glance at a few of the various groups that are gathered at the cross.

The most prominent actors were the Jewish people, with the chief priests, scribes, and elders at their head. These rulers, who had from the beginning rejected Christ’s claims, and whose opposition soon took the form of fierce hatred, now saw their plot to destroy Him successfully carried out, and in mocking triumph they said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. He is the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He said He was the Son of God; let God deliver Him now, if He will have Him.” Perhaps it was this mockery of the rulers that emboldened one of the malefactors, who was hanging on the cross near by, to join in the raillery, saying, “Art not thou the Christ? save Thyself and us.” The Roman soldiers also at first mocked Him, coming and offering Him vinegar, and saying, “If Thou art the King of the Jews, save Thyself.” All these saw, or feigned they saw, in the sufferer a pretender, a religious impostor, or a political traitor, who was justly receiving the reward of His deeds. “They knew not what they did.”

But there were others there. There were women, a

small group, beholding afar off. They knew—their hearts told them—He was no impostor, and while the other disciples, the very apostles, forsook Him in this hour and fled, they were true to the last. They stood beholding afar off, the memory of His gracious life filling their hearts with love and loyalty. No aspersions, no raillery, no charge had the least power to lessen their attachment. He was their Master still, though hanging on the cross—their Lord and Saviour.

There were other watchers yet. No human eye saw them on Calvary, as once they had been seen and heard at Bethlehem. But we may well believe that those angelic beings who strengthened Him in Gethsemane, and rolled away the stone from the mouth of the tomb, were looking on as He, their Lord in human form, was hanging on the cross. "These things the angels desire to look into." Could the eyes of men that day have been opened to see, as Elisha's servant's once were opened to see, into the spiritual world, what a cloud of silent, awe-struck witnesses of angelic rank would have been discovered in the neighbourhood of the cross. And if there are, as we are taught to believe there are, spirits of evil in this universe, there might have been seen also fiendish eyes of burning hate peering forth from their darkness to see with triumph the end of the tragedy. Once they cried, "We know Thee who Thou art, the holy Son of God; art Thou come to torment us?" Now *He* is in agony—their victim. Now is the hour and power of darkness.

But let us return to the soldiers, and consider what they saw as they watched Him there. As the time passed they saw more than they saw at first. Before

the day was done they were led to exclaim, "Truly this was a righteous man; this was the Son of God."

They saw, in the first place, a man suffering the agony of death in one of its most terrible forms, in which there is the acutest pain, with perfect consciousness, an intense burning fever and parching thirst, while every motion to get relief increases the torment. And this suffering was endured in public, amid reproach and insult, calumny and false accusations. How different from the death of some men, who in their last hours are tended by gentle hands and loving hearts, smoothing the pillow and wiping off the cold perspiration.

It was His own countrymen that brought about His death and heaped insults upon Him. This was obvious to the heathen soldiers. It was the Jews who delivered Him over to Pilate. It was they who were loudest in their taunts and mockery.

Amid the painful accounts of what is going on at the present hour in various parts of the world—the incursions of fierce barbarian tribes, the dragging of all they can seize back with them in slavery, parents and children and dearest friends separated for ever—it is some relief to know that such treatment is inflicted, not by friends, but by enemies. And as the poor victims sink under their cruelty, and die among strangers, they can comfort themselves with the thought that they are loved, and not forgotten by their own tribe.

But Jesus came unto His own, and His own received Him not. He was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But they despised and rejected Him. A true patriot, He cried, "O Jerusalem, Jeru-

saalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not;" and He wept over the miseries that were coming to the capital of His country. A true philanthropist, He went about doing good, day by day, seeking nothing else than to bless the souls and bodies of men with truth and healing. And yet, with very few exceptions, the whole nation was against Him—an opposition that grew to enmity, an enmity that grew to hatred, and led to the cry at last, "Away with Him; crucify Him; crucify Him." This is what the soldiers saw as they sat and watched Him there, a sufferer by the hands of His own countrymen.

But those rough and careless men saw more, which helped to awaken serious thought in some of them at least. As they looked up they saw over the head of the sufferer a remarkable inscription, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." And it was written by Pilate. They were not unacquainted with such things. Yet this superscription was peculiar. It spoke of the *King*, a king of the Jews, and a *Saviour*, Jesus of Nazareth.

Was this the claim that the sufferer put forth? What if there be some truth in it? A *King* and a *Saviour* dying thus! It was not impossible. Perhaps they had seen kings and chiefs of conquered nations gracing the triumph of their own Caesar; perhaps put to death before the people. Aye, they had heard of their own rulers assassinated by their own countrymen. It may be, therefore, that this crucified one is a King, the King of the Jews, though the Jews reject Him.

Jesus of Nazareth ! Where is Nazareth ? A little town in Galilee. And may not a Saviour come from such an obscure place ? There is nothing improbable in that. One of their own kings, the saviour of their country, was brought from his little farm, and from the very act of ploughing, to wield the sceptre and command their armies. Yes, the superscription may be true. And if true, what then ? They cannot tell. But at least they will cease to mock and rail. This is evidently no ordinary man. This the soldiers saw as they sat and watched Him there.

But they witnessed more. They heard strange words proceeding from His lips, words so different from what they were used to hear in such circumstances. The first were when they were driving the nails through His flesh. Instead of rage or angry look they heard, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Father ! That can only have one meaning. He is speaking to God. Is God His Father ? Father, forgive them. These are strange words at such a time. What a strange heart they disclose. If they had been in His place they would have called with all their might for the curse of heaven on their murderers. "Father, forgive them." These words the soldiers heard.

They saw also one of the malefactors undergo a wondrous change. When his neighbour joined in the raillery of the crowd, and taunted Jesus with being the King of Israel, he rebuked him, saying, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation ? And we indeed justly ; but this man hath done nothing amiss." Then they heard, for they were near enough

to hear, the words of wondrous faith, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom;" and they heard the no less wonderful words of promise, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Who is this that speaks of paradise and claims it as His kingdom, and offers a place in it to-day to this dying thief? The Romans believed in another world, but they never heard it spoken of in this fashion. This Man calls God His Father, and claims the unseen world as His kingdom.

They heard also another strange word, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" Perhaps they did not understand the words, for some of the bystanders thought He was calling on Elias. But they were words at least addressed to some unseen Being with whom the sufferer claimed relation, for they heard Him again saying, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and then He expired. These words the soldiers heard, for they were sitting watching. And they produced a deep impression. For they were accompanied by other things they saw and felt. About three hours after they had nailed their victim to the cross, at twelve o'clock in the day, darkness came down on the land, which continued for three hours. At the same time the earth trembled. It was out of the midst of that darkness that Jesus had cried "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?"—"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And just as it cleared away He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and expired. More than the soldiers were impressed. We are told that all who came together to that sight, when they beheld the things that were done, returned to the

city smiting on their breasts. These things the soldiers saw as they sat and watched Him there.

We are expressly told what was the effect on the mind of the centurion. When he saw what was done he glorified God and said, "Certainly this was a righteous man; truly this was the Son of God." We may well believe that the impression remained on his mind ever afterwards, and resulted in his personal confession of this Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of God and his Saviour.

Whether or not he made that confession, we have made it; and as we gather to-day at the cross we have a deeper insight into its meaning than he could possibly have. Let us recall a few of the points made clear to us as we look up to Christ on the cross. He is a sinless being. He could truly put the challenge, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" His accusers could not bring a single moral offence to His charge. Pilate declared His innocence, and washed his hands of the guilt of condemning Him. Judas, one of His disciples who knew intimately His private life, confessed that he had betrayed innocent blood. Though dying as a malefactor, nevertheless He was without transgression—"holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."

He was the Son of God. He always declared He was when occasion called. By word and deed He proved He was. Never man spake like this man. He was never taken by surprise. He knew what was in man, and spoke accordingly. His works were the works of God. "No man," said Nicodemus, "can do these miracles which thou doest except God be with him." The inference was just.



And yet this perfect, sinless man, the Son of God, is on the cross as a malefactor. We know why. Although we have seen Judas betraying Him, the Jews handing Him over to the Roman power, and Pilate delivering Him to be crucified, and the soldiers doing their cruel work of nailing Him to the cross, yet it was His own free act. He had the power to lay down His life. And He laid it down. Why? We know why. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." "My body is broken for you, my blood is shed for you," He said. Why? What led Him to make this sacrifice? We know why. By no other means could man be saved; and His love, which passeth knowledge, led Him to make the sacrifice,—a love which passeth knowledge, for there was no worth or beauty in the objects He loved. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: but God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." A love that passeth knowledge, for the sacrifice spans an infinite gulf—from the height of heaven to the lowest depths of hell—and involves a suffering which human thought cannot conceive.

That is what we see as we look to the cross. That is what is meant for the whole world to see, and which one day it will see. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men unto me." It is a world of sin. But a sacrifice has been offered sufficient for the world. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

It must strike every Christian heart with sorrow that so many of our fellow-men have never yet been taught the doctrines of the cross, and all the greater sorrow if by any negligence or sin of ours the advance of Christ's kingdom has been hindered. Is it not, should it not be, a cause of sorrow and shame to Christian men if they are more anxious to open up markets for their commerce in heathen lands than to tell those lands of the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ? Is it not, should it not be, a cause of shame if from Christendom there should go forth to influence those lands not the self-denying principles of Christian love, but selfish greed and dishonest dealing? What a glorious opportunity is Christian commerce to win the hearts of men to the obedience of Christ. But if the commerce be unchristian, if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? Men hasten to be rich, and despatch their rotten or adulterated goods to the unwary heathen, and then are surprised that missionaries make such slow progress, so few converts to Christianity. Ah, the cause of wonder is the other way.

But to come back to our station at the foot of the cross. We gather there as the disciples of Jesus, with gratitude to Him who died for us, and constrained by His love not to live unto ourselves, but unto Him. This is the meaning of our presence here this morning and of our place at His table in the afternoon.

## Sermon.

“I AM A STRANGER IN THE EARTH.”—*Ps. cxix. 19.*

AT first sight this seems a strange confession. Think of the man who made it. It was not one of the wandering, unsettled patriarchs. It was not such a one as Abraham, who left his home in the distant East, at the command of an unseen God, for an unknown land, who wandered about for seventy years, meeting none but strangers. No! It was one who ruled a kingdom and wore a crown, who dwelt in a gorgeous palace within a splendid capital, with all the luxuries of royalty—it was David, the greatest king of Israel, who said, “I am a stranger in the earth.”

The greatest poet of our land has said, “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,” and the poet king of Palestine in his experience, more than two thousand years before, had anticipated the truth. The history of David rendered the expression very emphatic in his case. He reached the throne by no royal road. Hunted like a wild beast upon the mountains, pursued with relentless hatred by the man who should have honoured him, for many years a wandering exile, like his great antitype, he was fitted for his office through suffering.

Nor yet at last, when the crown was placed upon his head, amid the acclamations of a rejoicing people, was his a life of peace. Continual wars abroad, the most vexatious revolts at home, violence and murder within the circle of his own family, the sweet singer of Israel, with his sensitive spirit and his soul thirsting for the living God, though surrounded by all the pomp of royalty and commanding a brave and numerous army, felt himself a stranger in the earth. And when he so expressed himself, he only said what every man on earth might say, whether he rank with princes or toil for his daily bread.

In the present discourse I shall endeavour first to illustrate the truth that man is a stranger in the earth, and, secondly, to point out the lessons which the truth should teach us.

I. The truth. When we follow out a certain train of thought, or make a certain class of observations, we would seem to come to the very opposite conclusion to that which the text indicates. Man seems to be fitted for earth, and the earth seems to be fitted for him. When we consider his mental and physical nature, how suited to all around him, and when we consider this world in which he dwells—this world, so full of beauty to delight the eye, its green sward and wooded plains, its rich valleys and pine-clad hills, its silver lakes and mountains rising into eternal snow, this world with its music to regale the ear, a grand harmony of voices of bird and breeze and stream and sea, this world with its green earth and blue sky, its glow by day and its smile by night—when we consider all this we may ask in surprise, Can man be a stranger

here? But this is only one view of the subject. This is but the bright side. Did all else correspond, man would be no stranger on earth, amid such beauty, such music, such abundance. But man needs more than a house to dwell in, however gorgeously furnished. He is a social being, and he needs society. And here we come to the dark side of the picture. It is a beautiful world we live in, but it is full of graves. Where are the friends of our childhood? Scattered or withered away. 'Tis a beautiful world we live in, but what of the men that surround us? Are they such as to make it a happy home? 'Tis a beautiful world we live in, but what shall its beauty avail when the earth falls dull on our coffin lid, and we lie down in darkness for ever? Yes, man is a stranger here.

Man as such is a stranger in the earth. His ignorance of the things and people around him proves it. What does he know of the things around him? He breathes the air of heaven, but can he tell what it is? He has analysed it into several gases. But he cannot tell what these gases are. He treads the earth and scents the flowers. Can he tell you how the flowers grow out of the earth, and why they breathe such perfume and glow with such various hues? He climbs the mountain side, and sails adown the stream; can he tell you why the mountain stands, and why the river flows? He gazes upwards into that midnight sky and sees stars and planets go round in silent grandeur, and comets come, like Sheba's queen, and salute the sun and retire. Can he tell us what they are? He can calculate, indeed, their distance, speed, and weight, but nothing more. Ever learning, but ever ignorant still,

with a spirit of research that is never satisfied, ever seeking to make the earth his home, his baffled attempts and his imperfect knowledge, proclaim him a stranger here. Again, what does he know of the people around him, or what do they know of him? I believe a man never feels so much the dreary sense of solitude as when he comes a stranger into a great city, when he passes along among the tide of human faces and hears the hum of human voices, and not a face and not a voice he knows. Unknowing and unknown, he is lonely in the midst of the crowd. As a stranger in a crowded city, so is man in the world. We are surrounded by our fellow-men, but we do not know them. Were the history of mankind written by one who thoroughly knows its secret springs, we think it would be found that the fiercest wars which have deluged the world with blood have sprung out of man's ignorance of his fellow-men. And even in private life, who has not to complain, with bitterness of spirit, that his conduct has been maligned through ignorance, and his motives misconstrued? Job and his friends have had their counterpart among men from that day to this. The rich has despised the poor man at the very moment the poor man was praying for him, and the poor man has cursed the rich even while the rich was contriving for his welfare.

The first principle of the world's morality is selfishness, man mind thyself its leading maxim—a principle and a maxim based on ignorance. Man mind thyself, if universally practised, would overthrow society, and would involve man, the individual, in misery. Wherever it is practised, it shows not less his ignorance of

his neighbour than of himself. Yes, it were easy to show that selfishness is a standing proof of the truth that man is a stranger in the earth. But we simply throw out the hint for your reflection, and repeat that man's ignorance of his fellow-men, whether as shown in unmerited eulogy or undeserved censure, in hard thoughts and painful misrepresentation, in want of sympathy and want of charity, in pride and scorn, contempt and hatred, proclaims him a stranger here. For I ask any of you if you do not feel as if you had been hardly dealt with at times by those who professed your friendship. You have not got credit for the good you wished, and your intentions have been perverted ; while you were conscious at other times you have passed for better than you are, and were praised for qualities you do not possess. What is true of you is true of all. Thus, by ignorance of the things and men around him, man is a stranger here.

Another mark of a stranger is that his stay in a place is only for a short time. This is perhaps the chief thought that the term stranger suggests, and so no word could better express the condition of man on earth. His stay is short at the longest, and he may be called away at any moment. Some scarcely appear until they disappear, little messengers from another world reminding us by their purity of the innocence we have lost, and beckoning us by their departure to the glory that excelleth. Others, reaching a patriarchal age, with stooping posture and feeble limbs, with dim eye and quivering speech, exclaim, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been!" Some are but beginning to learn the language and customs of the

country into which they have come, when they are called away into that other land where "we shall know even as we are known." True, a stranger in a foreign land may find a friend on the way, and spend a few hours or days of happy intercourse. But the hour arrives when they must take different roads, and they part from each other for ever. So it is with all of us. There are few so wretchedly poor as to be absolutely friendless. Husband, wife, child, parent, brother, sister, friend—one or other all of us have. But how long shall they be ours? Companions of our journey for a little, we may soon lose them for ever, and then, casting a long, lingering look ere they vanish from our sight, with dimmed eyes and sorrowing hearts, we shall feel the bitterness of the truth that we are strangers in the earth.

Death is the most effectual preacher of our text, and yet it is so often speaking that we heed not its warning voice. But let it strike home to our own hearts, and sound its cold, hard voice in our own dwelling, let it close the eyes that used to sparkle with life and joy, let it stiffen the limbs which used to walk by our side, and the hands whose warm grasp we have often felt, and we listen with a different feeling. You who have been spared the stroke of bereavement value the friends that you have; there is nothing so precious as love—the affection of a true friend; value them while they are with you, for you will separate one day—you are but a stranger in the earth. Everything around you is changing. The night follows the day not more surely than your life will be followed by death. You are yourself changing. Every breath you draw,



every step you take is wearing out the tent in which you live, and sooner or later, willing or unwilling, despite all your efforts to the contrary, it will fall about you—a mass of ruins—and proclaim you a stranger here.

Thus the text is true of man as such. It is equally true of the Christian. Nay, it is true of him in a special sense. Nothing so isolates a man from his fellows as a difference of taste and character. Let the sober and temperate man enter the company of drunkards and he will be a stranger. Let the peasant be introduced among princes and he will be a stranger. Let the illiterate man enter a company of scholars and he will be stranger. Let the profligate enter a prayer-meeting and he will be a stranger. Even so is the Christian in the world. It is not only that the world and the men of the world are unknown to him, it is not the change to which the world is subject, it is not even death, which fills the world with graves, but it is, above and beyond all, the sin of the world which renders the Christian a stranger here. With this thing, which is stamped on the world's forehead; with this thing, which meets him everywhere—an element in its business and in its pleasure, in its intercourse national, international, and social—with this thing he has no sympathy. On the contrary, it is his deadliest enemy, and he hates it with a perfect hatred. He knows what sin has done; it involved the human race in ruin, and withered the beauty of a primeval world. It stripped man of his glory, and robbed him of his dignity. It kindled hell for his agony, and nailed his Saviour to the cross. In

a world of sin, methinks a Christian must feel ill at ease. It is an element foreign to his nature. It is a poisonous atmosphere in which he languishes, and from which he longs to escape. Being born of God, he does not commit sin; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. His hopes and his joys all point to a distant home he expects one day to reach. He has no sympathy with the sins of earth. How can he have when his home is in heaven, and heaven is pure. His Father is in heaven, and God is pure; Christ is in heaven, and Christ is pure. He has no sympathy with the sinful pleasures of earth. How can he have when the joys of heaven are before him, and the pleasures which are at God's right hand; when there glitters before him the new Jerusalem with its golden streets and gates of pearl, with its undying music, its unwearying service, and its untiring society. Well may the man with such hopes exclaim, "I am a stranger here." The only wonder is that he should ever utter the words with a tone of sadness. To be a stranger here, with such a prospect yonder, is the highest honour a man can possess. Well might the apostle exclaim, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."

There is one thought I would mention before passing on to the next part of the subject. We have seen that man as such, and the Christian also, are strangers in the earth—the believer and the unbeliever alike. But there is a remarkable distinction. The man of the world is a stranger in the very world he loves. He is so against his will. The Christian, on the other hand, with his new nature and his affections set

elsewhere, acknowledges the truth of the text, and is a voluntary stranger. What a solemn thought to men of the world. It is not that they are strangers, but strangers in the very earth they love, where they are desirous of finding a home. You feel for the little bird when the nest is ruthlessly destroyed which it has toiled so hard and long to build. But more pitiable is the man of the world. The bird may build another nest; but he who has been labouring all his life to find a home on earth—Oh! what shall become of him when his frail tent is pulled down about him, and he is called on to go elsewhere by a summons which he cannot refuse. Oh, that such could remember that they are strangers here. It would save themselves much labour and the world much sorrow and suffering. Yes, for what do we find them doing too frequently? Defrauding their neighbours, oppressing the poor, extorting the last farthing of debt and the last fraction of labour, and all to establish a home on earth, which they may be called to quit at any hour. Or if not thus criminal, still equally foolish. Not content with the promised daily portion, acknowledging no Father's hand who distributes it, they spend their best energies and their precious time, they toil their bodies and rack their brains, rise early and sit late, devote their youth and vigour, their manhood and prime, and all for what? To build a nest which the winter of death shall destroy. Yes, brethren, there is not a more pitiful sight on earth—not the less pitiful that he says he does not wish your pity—than to see a man without a single thought of the God who made him, of the grave before him, or the eternity awaiting him, care-

fully gathering around him the wealth, the amusements, the friendships of the world, doing all he can to make himself a home here, and just as he is enjoying himself the truth suddenly presents itself that he is a stranger in the earth. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

II. One or two lessons which this subject should teach us. If a man is a stranger here he should adapt himself to his position, and live as a stranger. The folly of doing otherwise is apparent. What man will expend his entire means in repairing, fitting, and furnishing a house which he intends to leave at the next term? And even so we may ask, what wise man, in view of life's uncertainty, with the funeral never off the street, and the grave always open, will concentrate the whole energy of his being upon the present to the exclusion of that spiritual state which he knows he will soon enter? No wise man will do this. And yet thousands upon thousands of the world's respectables, who would turn upon you with a scowl or a sneer were you to question their wisdom, whose god is their belly, are guilty of this folly — bartering heaven's eternity for earth's seventy years, soul for body, spirit for matter. Brethren, if you would not be guilty of such folly, then as you are strangers live as such. Value the earth and all that the earth can give at their true worth. We do not say renounce the world. While God will supply your wants, you must labour yourselves. But know what the world is to you, and what it is not. It is not a home, but a pilgrimage. Know what the world is to your immortal spirit; that

it is not its rest or support. Remember that toil on earth is not the end for which you were made. While you submit to this without a murmur, and dwell on earth as long as God thinks fit, do not hug your chain, or love too fondly your prison house. Do not become naturalised in this foreign land. Remember you are a stranger and not a citizen.

If you are a stranger here, then you will be ever turning your thoughts and steps to your future home. We can easily conceive men of such easy contented nature that they trouble themselves little about that which occupies the attention of most men. They work while they are in the mood, and take what comes with the utmost indifference. No man can accuse them of avarice, ambition, or worldliness in the ordinary sense. But they are not the more praiseworthy on that account. They are simply loungers or drones in the world. Contentment with godliness is great gain, but this kind of contented idleness has no merit whatever. No. If it is foolish to spend the energies in the vain endeavour to establish a home in the world, it is equally foolish to pass through it in this easy way and take one's chance for the future. The devil baits his hook according to the different natures of men. Some he allures by riches, others he allures by ease, and it is hard to tell which is the more successful. There seem to be as many of the one class as of the other. Remind them of the truth of the text, and with a freezing coolness they will answer, "Of course, we are perfectly aware that we are mortal; we must go the way of all the earth. No one needs to tell us that." No one needs to tell them that, and yet they are living

in careless indifference. If there be any such easy souls here, then rouse you from your carelessness. We do not tell you you are mortal, but we say you are immortal—a destiny of glory or of gloom awaits you. Do you think you will reach the glory by your present indifference? Are you wise men, or was Paul a fool when he exclaimed, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forth to those that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” The apostle was no fanatic when he uttered these words, but a sober, calculating Christian—a man who felt he was a stranger in the earth, and strove to make sure of a home elsewhere when the time of his departure should come. So be it with you. Whatever you are in this world, be in earnest about the next.

In conclusion—If it is true we are all strangers in the earth, it is also true that we shall all reach our respective homes at last. I do not mean that we shall all lie down in the grave. This, indeed, is the home of all in one sense, where the bodies of the saint and of the sinner mingle for a time. But beyond the grave, and beyond the tomb, there’s a home for the good and a home for the bad. We shall be no strangers there. “We shall know even as we are known,” and our stay shall be for ever. Every man shall find his home. There’s a place of unmingled purity, and there’s a place of unmingled pollution. There’s a place of unmingled happiness, and a place of unmingled woe. Earth alone, so far as we know, is the only place where good and evil are found together. Heaven, like a mighty

magnet, is drawing all the good; hell, like another, is drawing all the evil. Which is attracting us? Are we yielding to the good, or are we yielding to evil? We are strangers here, but whither are we going? Heavenward or hellward? Are any of you in doubt as to how you are going? Then by this you may know. Yonder stands the cross on which Immanuel bled. What is that fact to you? What do you see there? What is its meaning? Do you see there the love of your Saviour, God—a sacrifice for the world's sin—and the opening of heaven's gate to the guilty? Is that cross your hope, your trust, your joy, and He who was nailed to it the object of your affection and your faith? Or is it standing there as if it had never been reared, without a look, without a thought from you? The road to heaven is by that cross. Stranger on earth, whither are you going? That cross will determine. Miss that, despise that; wander up and down the world, chase its shadows, gather its gold, pursue its pleasures, enjoy its ease; take life as it comes, and let the future bring what it will. Do this. The time will pass quickly enough, you will get through your pilgrimage, you will reach your home; but what home? The home of all the despisers of God, where, in the words of the Saviour, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Stranger on earth, would you reach that other home, where there is no sorrow, and no pain, and no bereavement, no parting, no death because no more sin—a place whose mansions all are palaces and its inhabitants princes, where there's a crown on every head and a sceptre in every hand, joy unspeakable and life everlasting—would you have

this as your home at last ? Then the road is along by Calvary's cross. Haste ye thither. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and one day you shall be with Him in His Father's house of many mansions.



## Sermon.

“IN MY FATHER’S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS.”—*John xiv. 2.*

WHILE these words were spoken to comfort the sorrowing disciples, they express a truth of unspeakable importance to the whole human family. They not only reveal the fact of a future life, but they give us a glimpse of its nature. They suggest to us a state of being which we can all appreciate. The truth revealed not only satisfies our desire for immortality, but the instincts we have as social beings. It not only answers the question, “If a man die, shall he live again?” but it assures all Christian people of an enduring life, and of happiness in its highest form in the heavenly world.

Here, then, is a matter that concerns us all very deeply. Life and immortality have been brought to light. The veil has been lifted between this and eternity. The great mystery hidden for ages has been revealed by the Son of God who came forth from the Father, and the glorious inheritance may one day be yours and mine.

The question is—Shall it? Are our names written in heaven, so that we are already known there as the

sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty? Shall we be received into that house of which our Saviour speaks when this our pilgrimage is over? Have we the title and the qualifications and the well-grounded hope of an inheritance among the redeemed? I need not say that this promise, like every other of the Gospel, is coupled with certain conditions. It is His own friends He is now comforting with the words of the text. And so still, it is only as friends that we can cherish the hope of a blessed immortality. But if there is this bond of union between Christ and us, if we are His now by faith and love, then, as He is not not ashamed to call us brethren, He will by-and-by receive us into His Father's house of many mansions.

Let me invite your attention to a few thoughts which the words suggest.

I. They represent heaven as a Home. The best of earthly things are taken to shadow forth the heavenly. And certainly among the best of earthly things is the *home*. All that is purest and best—disinterested love and unsuspecting trust—are concentrated here, so that it has become a maxim, "There's no place like home." However misunderstood we may be by the world outside, here we are known by those we love. However coldly we may be treated by strangers, as soon as we enter the home and mingle with the loved ones there we are at our ease.

Home is a place for rest, shelter, love, and enjoyment. The child feels secure under his father's roof; he has no care, no anxiety, no fear. Brothers and sisters are free from restraint, and speak out their thoughts with confidence. If there is any place on

earth where self-forgetting generosity dwells, it is here. What belongs to one belongs to all, even as the parental love itself.

This is the idea of home, not often realised, it is true. But it is the ideal which our Lord presents to us as the type of heaven. He would allay our fears by telling us it is our Father's house. New as the scene and society may be, we shall not feel strange. We shall not feel out of our element. We shall not shrink away, as it were, out of sight. The home feeling so familiar to us here will at once take possession of us there. It is our Father's house we enter, and all whom we shall meet we shall find to be brethren, knit together by a common affection to Him who is at once our elder brother and Divine Saviour.

Is not this a very precious truth? What is it that makes even the Christian sometimes timid in the anticipation of death? Is it not the fact that all beyond the veil through which he has to pass is new and untried. He fears somehow he will be a stranger in that great eternity. He does not at present know what shall be the mode of his existence, how he shall know or recognise the dwellers there. With the body left behind, how can there be sight or sound, or speech or motion? As he reads of heaven in the Word of God he finds human language only hinting at the unspeakable glory, describing it chiefly by negatives, excluding from the idea all the misery and evil we experience in the present life, but giving little knowledge of a positive kind.

Now this word of Christ should dispel all fear. Whatever else heaven may be, it is a home for those

who enter it. It is our Father's house. Just as during the present life one stage has naturally and appropriately led on to the next—as there have been no sudden leaps or springs from one experience to another, childhood leading imperceptibly on to youth, and youth to manhood, each period preparing us for the next, so that we are never taken by surprise—so in like manner the transition from the present to the future life shall be felt by every Christian to be the most natural and easy, and free from strangeness.

And there will be no jarring or discord. We shall know even as we are known. Among the imperfections of our present life, not the least is our ignorance of one another. Our words are often misunderstood, our motives misconstrued. Hence multiplied jealousies and heart-burnings and bitter estrangements. And while in the home as it should be these things will not be found, yet, alas! even here, and among the members of the same family, these misunderstandings will arise and estrangements follow through ignorance of each other. Ah, yes! many a home is broken up by other causes than death. Blindness and prejudice and selfishness have often done their deadly work long before the last enemy approached. It will be otherwise in the home above. We shall know even as we are known. Confidence will never be shaken or disturbed. Affection will never be marred by selfishness, nor misunderstanding arise from ignorance.

There will be also the feeling of security, and absence of care. We realise this thought best when we go back in memory to the days of our childhood. It is this which throws around that early time the

golden light of poetry. There may have been poverty and pinching care and anxiety on the part of the parents, but the children knew nothing or little of it all. Happy in the present, they had no fear for the future. It is because of this experience that the most of us think so lovingly of the old home. Let us then carry with us this thought into our conception of heaven. As children in the earthly home, so shall we be in heaven. We shall be done for ever with all the worry and toil, and fear that is worse than labour. We shall get back the feeling of childhood along with the experience of age. We shall once again be in our Father's house, with the buoyancy and gladness of youth that shall never decay. Absolute security—no shadow of doubt, neither a tremor of fear, but imperishable confidence in the Father's love, friendship and fellowship with all the redeemed and unfallen family of God—these are what we are taught as belonging to heaven when Christ says "In my Father's house are many mansions."

II. Heaven is a home that shall never be broken up. The word translated mansions contains this truth. And thus another instinct of the human soul is met and satisfied. Amid the shifting scenes of the present, amid the observed and conscious evanescence of all earthly things, the heart of man yearns for that which is enduring. The good we receive we seek to retain, and the happiness we enjoy we wish to continue. We know, indeed, that this cannot be in the present world, and we must submit to the inevitable. The earthly home gets broken up and the members are scattered—sometimes swiftly and suddenly, sometimes slowly and

gradually. Some dread calamity, as in Job's case, may sweep away the whole family at a stroke, or at long intervals one after another may depart. But in whatever manner, this is the lot of all. Here we have no continuing city, no sure place of abode. But it is different when we reach the Father's house. "When the earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, eternal in the heavens." Erected by God, it will abide for ever. Its materials are imperishable. Its foundation is on the Rock of Ages. It is lifted up out of the sphere of time, and cannot pass away. The corrupting element of sin and the levelling power of death are unknown there. There will be no fear of losing and no desire of leaving the society and enjoyments of that home.

The home on earth sometimes becomes unsuitable. There is need of change. Such a need will never be felt in heaven. Those mansions will never become too small or mean for our comfort or happiness. There will be no decay and no demolition, and no need of improvement. The mansions of glory will never grow old. The atmosphere of heaven will never corrode them. No storms will ever sweep across that land, nor fire nor flood devastate the buildings of God. Like Himself, they will be the dwelling-place of His people in all generations. Eternity is a continual beginning, and after millions of cycles of ages have rolled past with all their happy history, we shall find that we are just beginning again our happy life. Yes! the inheritance to which we are born is incorruptible, and fadeth not away.

If that is true, the Christian need not sorrow over

the imperfection and change of the present. He need not grudge the separation of loved ones here, if those that are taken from him are removed to that happier home beyond and he has the prospect of meeting them again. This is the true order of things; first that which is natural, then afterwards that which is spiritual; first the temporal, then the eternal—the changes and sorrows and separations now, and then the meeting and the gladness and the ever-enduring. “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable.” The new life and sympathies and aspirations which He has called forth in us would be all quenched in the grave. But we know it is far otherwise. “When the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, eternal in the heavens.”

III. Heaven will have many inhabitants. “Are there few that be saved?” was once asked of our Lord. Here He virtually answers “No! In my Father's house are many mansions.” Besides this statement, there are various reasons for believing that the saved will vastly outnumber the lost. We cannot think of Christ being satisfied with the travail of His soul if only a few were saved. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and surely that purpose would be unfulfilled if Satan could number a larger host than He on that great day. Hitherto, indeed, it would seem as if the majority of mankind had been led captive by the prince of darkness. But the Gospel dispensation is not yet ended. There is a time coming when whole nations will be born in a day, when all the ends of the world will remember and turn unto the Lord. There

will be times when the earth's population will be vastly greater than ever it has been since the fall, when crime and violence will cease, and war and famine and pestilence will be unknown. A thousand years of such a state of things, as is hinted in Scripture, will more than counterbalance the previous ages of Satan's power. Christ will triumph in point of numbers. The majority of our race will be found at last on the Lord's side. Yea, it has been so already. The larger portion of the human family die in childhood. These are not lost, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." We are warranted, then, in concluding that the number of the redeemed, like the mansions themselves, will be many, a multitude which no man can number. Oh, Father! fill us with Thy love, and keep us, that at last we may be found in that happy company.

But the word *many* suggests also variety. There is no monotony in the works of God. There will be none in heaven. In this world, though lying under the curse, what diversified beauty there is. In one little landscape there is enough to engage the study of many lives. In one single flower-bed there is endless variety. This is the principle of God's works and ways on earth. We cannot doubt it will be the same in heaven.

Some people have strange ideas of the heavenly state. Some think of it as continual singing, some as a continual ecstasy, and some as continual rest. Yes, it is singing, and rapture, and rest, but it is more. It is all that our perfected nature could desire, the satisfaction of every faculty and part of our being. There will be room, and scope, and work for all God's sons.



None will feel disappointed in His occupation, or restrained in His longing, or unsatisfied in His desire. There may not be science or art in heaven. But surely that spirit in man which leads to science and art will not be crushed out of him? Oh, no; we need not fear that heaven will grow tame from monotony. While all will bear a family likeness, the variety will be infinite. While one sentiment will bind the entire family in one, there will be, I believe, friendship and occupations congenial to the nature which God our Father has given us. "In my Father's house are many mansions."

Thus, we have seen that the words of Christ suggest these thoughts—Heaven a home, a home never broken up, a home with many inhabitants, and infinite variety of occupation and enjoyment suited to all.

Now let us consider the matter in a practical aspect. I remarked that it is a subject that concerns us all. No one will doubt that. We must all leave the present world. Who are they that will get to heaven? Only those who are prepared for it. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Unless you have passed through that experience you cannot take the comfort of these words. If you are not Christ's you have as yet no title to that inheritance. For "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Is it so? Then you will not deem it impertinent in me to ask you whether you have taken Christ as your Saviour, whether you are Christ's indeed, and whether you have good hope of eternal life?

Some people evidently do not wish a better world than the present. Well, it is a beautiful world we

live in. But it is full of graves. The good things here will not last. That is a great grief. It is a world in which men will grow old and weak, unfit for activity, unfit for enjoyment. Earth is not a home for man, much less a heaven. There is *both* for us in Christ. O, why should any of us miss that glorious destiny? There is no reason why we should. "This is the record that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." He that hath the Son hath life, and the Son of God offers Himself to all. Let not the complaint hold true against any of us, "Ye *will* not come unto Me that ye might have life."

## Literary Selections.



## Literary Selections.

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### NEW YEAR'S HYMNS.

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Dr Wilson was in the habit of writing yearly a New-Year's hymn, and some of these found their way into the Children's Missionary Magazine.

The following are good examples of this kind of work so pleasant to himself :—

#### I.

God of Salvation we praise Thee this day ;  
All through our life Thou hast guarded our way :  
Still Thou wilt lead us, and still we shall trust—  
Destined for glory, though sprung from the dust.

Onward Thou callest us, onward we'll go,  
Rough though the way, and our steps be but slow ;  
Thou wilt give heart and strength, we shall prevail ;  
God of Salvation, Thy word cannot fail.

Jesus, Thou Son of God, dying to save ;  
Victor in dying, o'er sin and the grave :  
Under Thy banner this day we appear,  
Trusting in Thee we shall faint not nor fear.

Onward Thou callest us, onward we'll go,  
Rough though the way be, and strong though the foe ;  
Thou wilt give heart and strength, we shall prevail ;  
Jesus, Redeemer, Thy power cannot fail.

Spirit of holiness dwell Thou within,  
Scatter the dark clouds of error and sin.  
Fill us with wisdom, and fire us with love,  
Lead us through life to the glory above.

Onward Thou callest us, onward we'll go,  
Rough though the way, and our steps be but slow ;  
Thou wilt give heart and strength, we shall prevail ;  
Spirit of Truth and Love, Thou wilt not fail.

## II.

Angel hosts are singing  
Hail to the dawning year ;  
They come, O Father, bringing  
The cup of heavenly cheer—  
Peace and goodwill,  
Thy greeting still  
To mankind far and near.

With joy we take the token,  
The cup of love divine ;  
With vows in silence spoken  
We put our hands in Thine.  
To feel Thee near  
Will banish fear,  
Though the sun forget to shine.

We praise the love that brightened  
Our path in darksome day,  
And every burden lightened  
On fainting soul that lay :  
Even dried the tears,  
And quelled our fears,  
When loved ones passed away.

We clasp the hands beside us—  
Dear hearts to whom we cling—  
May discord ne'er divide us,  
Nor venom'd arrows sting,  
Let glowing hearth,  
Of golden worth,  
With cheering accents ring.

Where broken hearts are sighing,  
Where moans of pain are heard,  
Where souls in sin are dying,  
Bring in Thy healing word.  
With hearts like Thine,  
Saviour Divine,  
By active pity stirred.

The weak are strong in duty,  
The meek in wisdom grow,  
And grand with fairest beauty  
Is the heart with love aglow.  
Lord, wisdom give,  
Where'er we live,  
Our time, our task to know.

Oh let the year beginning,  
To waiting eyes unfold  
The hosts of darkness thinning !  
Soon may the time foretold  
By seraph choir  
And prophet lyre  
Draw near—the age of gold !

May Thy whole church awaken  
To do Thy great behest !  
May weary lands forsaken,  
In Thee at last find rest ;  
And angels sing,  
With folded wing,  
O'er a world redeemed and blest.

## War Song.

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FROM THE GREEK OF TYRTÆUS.

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This is one of Dr Wilson's earliest attempts at translation, and appeared in the *Noetic Magazine* for 1855. It was probably an exercise in Professor Dunbar's class in Edinburgh University, and is especially interesting as an incursion into a field of Greek literature seldom visited now-a-days. It is both a spirited and stirring composition, and a faithful rendering of the original, conveying not a little of the martial ring of the words with which Tyrtæus sought to rouse the courage of his Spartan soldiers. Only four of the poems of Tyrtæus are extant, preserved in the writings of Stobæus and in the speech of Lycurgus against Leocrates. It is the first of these Dr Wilson has rendered into verse. He prefaces the translation with a note :—

“ In presenting the following translation of a war song of Tyrtæus, the writer deems it proper to state that it appears with a totally different view from that of the pieces hitherto published in the magazine. As a piece of English poetry, it has no pretensions whatever ; and is offered solely in the hope of interesting those of the readers who still love the language of Homer and Demosthenes, and of inciting other and worthier pens to that most useful and elegant exercise—poetical translation from the old Greek.”



No honour pay I to the man, no tribute to his name,  
Though swift as Boreas of limb, though Cyclop-like his frame,  
Though all great Midas' wealth were his, or e'en a loftier crown  
Than ever sparkled on the brow of Tantalus' proud son.  
Had he Tethonus' matchless grace, or fell there from his tongue  
More honey'd sounds than in old time Adrastus ever sung ;  
Though virtue, justice all were his : I honour not his name,  
Unless amid the din of war, he earn a hero's fame.

O 'tis a grand immortal thing, to conquer in the fray,  
The highest, noblest, dearest prize a youth can bear away.  
See, joy is in a nation's heart, joy in each city home,  
For forth to fight, with dauntless might, a warrior hath come ;  
See, with a firm, victorious stride he seeks the foremost van,  
And flings around him words of fire to cheer each weaker man.  
Perish the dastard thought of flight—perish the thought of life—  
His falchion sweeps battalions down, his soul is in the strife ;  
And lion-like he presses on, while flee the foes afar,  
And as a rock 'mid ocean's storms, stems the red wave of war.

And if amid the battle's din the evil fated dart,  
Piercing through shield and armour bright, should reach his noble  
heart,  
Then loud and deep the wail of woe that nation oft shall hear,  
And many a sigh from loving hearts be breathed around his bier ;  
And oft adown the cheek of age the glistening tear will roll,  
And infancy in sorrow lisp a blessing on his soul.  
Graved on the proud sepulchral urn will stand his glorious name ;  
His far descendants shine in the effulgence of his fame ;  
Through endless time the tale will live of him who bravely died  
For children and for fatherland in the red battle-tide.

But if victorious he escape the icy grasp of fate,  
And bear away the proud reward which valiant hearts await,  
Then honours, glittering and rare, he reaps on every hand—  
The object of a nation's love, the idol of his land.  
Low bow to him the hoary heads, low bows each youthful brow—  
He was their saviour in the fight, they pay him homage now.  
Oh then let honour great as this be every Spartan's aim,  
Amid the thunder of the fight, to earn a hero's fame.



# The Greek Drama,

WITH METRICAL TRANSLATIONS FROM

IPHIGENIA IN TAURIS.

During one of the more recent seasons the Greek Club read together the *Iphigenia in Tauris*. The enjoyment of the reading was greatly enhanced by the fact that Dr Wilson frequently gave a poetical translation of the evening's work. He himself became thoroughly interested in the whole subject of the Greek drama, of which he made a special study. In opening the literary society in connection with his own church, he gave them the results of his study in the shape of a deeply interesting lecture on the Greek drama, illustrated by the story of the *Iphigenia in Tauris*. The lecture was highly appreciated, and appears in this volume at the request of several who heard it delivered.

## Story of the Greek Drama.

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POETRY may express itself in three well recognised forms—the lyric, the epic, and the dramatic. The lyric is the personal expression of mental emotion, either joyful or sad as the case may be. The *song* is an illustration of the lyric. The epic, as the word implies, is descriptive poetry, the representation of events, or of an action in progress. The poet relates them with perfect equanimity, regarding them as already past. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, the great works of Dante, the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, are examples of the epic. The dramatic, on the other hand, represents action going on at the present time. Persons and events are brought before the spectator as real, and produce the emotions which reality excites. The most familiar examples are the plays of Shakspeare.

I wish to-night to bring before you one of the ancient Greek type. Before doing so, it may be well to recall the fact that the drama itself may assume a twofold shape. It may take the form of tragedy or of comedy. There are among the Greek Classics exquisite examples of both, in the works, viz., of *Æschylus* and *Aristophanes*.

The *Iphigenia* of Euripides is also a tragedy. It is

essentially so in form until the closing scene. The feelings of the spectators would be wrought up intensely, when suddenly the poet introduces a device, quite common on the Greek stage, whereby poetical justice was satisfied.

One word upon the Greek theatre. It was totally different from the modern. It was of colossal size, capable of holding 30,000 or 40,000 spectators, the entire population (*i.e.*, the free citizens) of the place. It was open to the sky, and their dramas were always acted in daytime, under the canopy of heaven. The seats were arranged in tiers round the semicircle of the orchestra. The orchestra (corresponding to the pit) was left free, being allotted to the chorus, consisting of women, who represented public opinion, if we may so speak. By song and measured movement, or dance, they came in at various parts of the proceedings. The stage was elevated considerably above the orchestra. A broad flight of steps connected the two, on which the chorus, and especially the leader, stood and chanted their parts.

The performers on the stage, being so far removed from the vast audience, wore the cothurnus, a kind of high boot, to increase their height, and also a kind of mask, which had the effect of increasing the loudness of the voice. Throughout the building also there were other acoustic contrivances by which all present might hear.

It may be remarked that the performance of a drama was a great festival occasion, when strangers from all parts came to join and witness the spectacle. The interest was often increased by the fact that

national prizes were awarded to the poet who put the best drama on the stage.

Euripides, the author of this and other dramas, was born in the island of Salamis, 480 B.C., and died 406. The material he uses is that which was common to the Greek race, the history of the Trojan war, and the legends and myths which formed so large a part of their religion.

Agamemnon and Achilles, referred to in the drama, were two of the principal Grecian chiefs who set out for the siege of Troy, in revenge for the capture of Helen by Paris, the son of Priam, the Trojan King. The war lasted ten years.

Before setting out for Troy, Agamemnon left Ægisthus, his cousin, to take care of his wife and children and house. This cousin soon betrayed his trust. News was brought to Agamemnon, before the walls of Troy, that his wife was unfaithful, and he resolved on revenge as soon as he should return home. At the conclusion of the siege he did return, but was treacherously murdered by his wife and her paramour. Orestes, his son, would also have been put to death, but for the help of his sister, Electra, who managed his escape. Orestes, after an absence of seven years, and after consulting the oracle of Apollo, returned to Mycenæ to avenge his father's murder.

By this time he was reported to be dead, and his mother, with Ægisthus, who were now married, repaired to the temple to give thanks for the news; but Orestes, with his faithful friend Pylades, had concealed himself in the temple, and, rushing out, slew with his own hand the guilty pair.

But this deed was immediately followed by the most terrible consequences. Like another Cain he was pursued by the avenging furies. He fled to Argos, but still got no rest. At last he consults the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. He is informed that he cannot be cured of his frenzy until he should go to the Tauric Chersonese, on the Euxine, and fetch away the statue of Diana from the temple there. This was a difficult and dangerous enterprise, for the king of that country always seized any strangers from Greece, and sacrificed them on the altar of the goddess.

It is the evil fate that seemed to haunt the house of Atreus that runs through the drama of Iphigenia, and gives it such a tragic interest. I may mention that Euripides has left two plays with Iphigenia as the chief character. The first is entitled, "Iphigenia in Aulis," and the second, "Iphigenia in Tauris." It is the latter that forms the subject of the present sketch.

The opening of the piece represents Iphigenia relating her parentage and experience up to the present time. She is the daughter of Agamemnon, and was miraculously saved from death, and transported to the shore of the Black Sea, where she has been made priestess of Artemis or Diana. She tells how her deliverance took place. As the Greeks were about to sail for the siege of Troy, storms and adverse winds detained them at the port of Aulis. It was then announced by a divine oracle that they would not be able to start until the daughter of Agamemnon, one of the chiefs, should be offered in sacrifice; but she, (*i.e.*, Iphigenia) was with her mother at home. Accordingly a device had to be formed to fetch her. It was



pretended that she was to become the wife of Achilles, and she must make all haste. She arrived at the port of Aulis, only to find, however, that she was doomed to die by the hands of her own father.

While she was laid on the altar, and while Agamemnon, her father, was about to plunge the knife into her bosom, the goddess, Artemis, substituted an animal, and bore her away through the air to the barbarous land on the Euxine, and left her there as the priestess of her temple.

One of her duties, as priestess, was to offer in sacrifice to the deity any stranger from Greece that arrived on that shore. Such was the law of the land. She then relates a dream of her distant home in Argos:—

I dreamt I left this land and dwelt in Argos far away,  
And in my chamber there at home in slumber sweet I lay,  
When sudden trembling shook the earth, and forth in fear I fled,  
And as I stood and gazed, behold ! the coping high o'er head  
Gave way, and all the tottering roof, from topmost pillars round  
The palace walls, on every side fell crashing to the ground.  
Of all my father's house, methought, one pillar stood alone,  
And from its head flowed yellow locks and came a human groan ;  
Then sad and weeping I began my murderous work to ply,  
And sprinkled with the lustral drops the victim doomed to die !

Her interpretation of the dream was, that Orestes, her brother, whom she left an infant, must be dead, and so all hope of her father's house perished. While she goes into the temple to present an offering to the soul of her brother, two strangers appear on the scene.

They move about cautiously, looking round lest they may be observed. They examine the temple on all sides, they see the marks of human sacrifice, skulls,

etc., beneath the cornice, and conclude that this must be the place they are in search of.

The strangers are no other than Orestes himself, Iphigenia's brother, and his friend Pylades.

After a short conversation, Orestes addresses the god Apollo, and in the course of the address explains why it is he is here :—

O, Phœbus, how thine oracle

Has snared me here again !

When to avenge my father's death my mother I had slain,  
Driven by assailing furies forth, an exile forced to roam,  
I doubled many a winding course an outcast from my home ;  
Then came I and enquired of thee how I might find release  
From this, my driving madness, and from all my toils in Greece.  
And this was thy response—to come as far as Tauris land,  
Where to thy sister, Artemis, high holy altars stand,  
And there the goddess image seize, which fell from heaven, they say,  
Down to this shrine, and, carrying it by skill or chance away,  
All danger risking, hand it o'er on Athens' soil to stay.  
No more was said. Should I succeed in doing thy behest,  
My labours all would have an end, and I would then have rest.

Here then I come, at thy command,

To this unknown and cruel land !

Orestes then appeals to his friend :—" How shall we get inside the temple and bear away the image. If we are discovered, then death is certain. Were it not better to flee at once, and return whence we came ? "

Pylades rejects the cowardly proposal :—

That cannot be ; nor are we used to basely take to flight ;

Nor yet the oracle divine must any mortal slight.

But let us now the temple leave, and down within the cave,  
Far from our ship, lie hid, where breaks the dark sea's splash-  
ing wave,

Lest some one should behold the ship and tell it to the king,  
And we should then by force be seized and led to suffering.

So they agree to lie in wait for a favourable opportunity.

The chorus now appear on the scene, which consisted of women attendants, servants of the priestess Iphigenia, and, like herself, natives of Greece, held in captivity. Generally one of them speaks in name of the rest.

She addresses Iphigenia, and asks what new grief is this, that she is presenting an offering for the dead ?

Iphigenia answers :—

Ah, my maidens, how I lie  
 Plunged in wailing misery !  
 Plaints discordant, loud and long—  
 Not the melody of song—  
     Grief, alas ! for kindred dear.  
 Woeful fate has struck me sore—  
 Brother mine alive no more,  
     Mourn I with the bitter tear.  
 Oh, I've had a dream so dread  
 In the night that just has fled :  
     Undone ! undone !  
 No more ancestral home,  
 Our race, alas, all gone ;  
     Oh, trouble now to Argos come !  
 Thou hast robbed me, fate severe,  
 Of my only brother dear ;  
 Sending him to Hades drear.  
 Now I go to mix the bowl ;  
 Honouring the departed soul.

Then the chorus reply in sympathy.

Then Iphigenia :—

From the first, even from the womb,  
 Evil fate has been my doom.  
 Led as sacrifice along,  
 Victim doomed for father's wrong ;  
 Then to Aulis' sandy shore  
 On stately chariot swift they bore

Bride, unhappy bride to be,  
 Of Achilles—woe is me !  
 Now, in bleak abode and drear,  
 By the wild sea dwell I here—  
 Stranger, and no husband own,  
 Childless, homeless, friendless, lone.  
 Not in Argos far away,  
 Chanting Juno's joyous lay ;  
 Nor with shuttle on the loom,  
 Sounding with melodious hum,  
 Weaving Pallas' picture bright,  
 And the Titans' impious fight ;  
 But besmearing altars o'er  
 With the strangers' dripping gore ;  
 Cursed tortures, sad to hear,  
 Piteous wail and welling tear.  
 But these horrors I forget ;  
     Now I wail my brother's blood,  
 Whom I left an infant, yet  
     Still a child, a tender bud,  
 In his mother's arms upheld—  
     To her bosom fondly drawn—  
 Dear Orestes, born to wield  
     Sceptre over Argos town.

While the chorus and Iphigenia are thus conversing, a herdsman arrives in haste, with a message for the priestess. Two youths have been shipwrecked on the shore, and have been caught. He supposes it will be welcome news, for these strangers will be offered up in sacrifice to the goddess Artemis.

Iphigenia questions him as to the strangers, as to their appearance, and how they were taken.

The herdsman replies :—

When to the sea that flows between  
     Symplegades we drove  
 Our woodland herd, we found a cleft  
     A wave-lashed hollow cove,

Resort of murex-fishers ; here  
A herdsman chanced to view  
Two stranger youths, and, half in fear,  
On tip-toe back withdrew,  
And cried, "Lo ! see ye not ? they're gods !  
Those beings sitting there."

Then one of us, a pious one,  
Raised eyes and hands in prayer—  
"Oh, son of Lencothea, guard  
Of ships that sail the sea ;  
Our lord Palaemon, in this strait  
To us propitious be !"

Another, vain and bold in sin,  
Laughed at the prayer, and said  
They were wrecked sailors hiding there  
In the ravine from dread ;  
Because they heard our custom is  
All strangers here to slay.  
Most thought him right, and set to hunt  
The goddess' usual prey.

Then one of the two strangers rose  
And left the rock and stood,  
And up and down he shook his head,  
And piteous groaned aloud,  
Trembling even to his finger ends,  
And uttering frantic cries,  
With yells and shouts, like huntsman keen,  
As in the chase he flies—  
"Oh, Pylades, see'st thou not this,  
This snake of Hades ? See !  
It seeks to slay me, gapes its mouth  
Of vipers dread at me :  
From out its coat of scaly folds  
Slaughter and fire it blows ;  
And with my mother clutched in arm,  
With stroke of wing it rows  
To hurl her at me from on high !  
O, death to me ! Where shall I fly ?"

But no such forms did we behold ; he but mistook the sound  
Of lowing ox and barking dog for furies raging round.  
And as we crouched like dying men, and sat without a word,  
He draws his sword, springs wildly in, like lion, on the herd  
Slashes and stabs their flanks and ribs, as if in vengeance sore  
Upon the fury fiends, until the sea sprayed red with gore.  
Then all of us, as we behold the ravaged cattle fall,  
Equip ourselves, and blow the shells, the neighbours round to call,  
Deeming we were too weak to meet those strangers, young and tall.  
Then soon a crowd assembled, and, the fit of frenzy past,  
The stranger, all his beard besmeared with foam, falls down at last.  
But from his mouth the other wiped the foam with gentle care,  
And o'er his body spread his own rich robe of texture fair ;  
Watching against the coming blows, and carefully did tend,  
With all the service love could give, his well-beloved friend.  
Now when the stranger, mind restored, perceived their woeful plight,  
The storm of foes and ruin near, he groaned loud at the sight.  
But all of us, from different points, still hurled the stones about,  
When suddenly there met our ear a dreadful battle-shout—  
“ O, Pylades, if die we must, then let us nobly die ;  
Out with your sword and follow me, we'll fight but never fly ! ”  
So when we saw the two-edged sword flash in the enemies' hand,  
We fled and filled the craggy wood with all our flying band.

At last their swords were knocked out of their hands by the stones hurled at them, and, from sheer exhaustion, they fell, and were taken. They were led first to the king, who looked at them with disdain, and ordered them off to the priestess for slaughter.

Iphigenia is ready to perform her function. In a long soliloquy she confesses that she used to pity the strangers that thus came in her way ; but now, since she is assured of the death of Orestes, her brother, she shall have no compassion. She will sternly sacrifice these strangers in vengeance for the intended sacrifice of herself ; and then her thoughts wander

back to the unhappy time when she was led to the altar, and how she implored her father to spare her:—

Oh, never shall that awful time pass from my memory !  
 How oft I clutched my father's beard, and clasped him by the knee,  
 And cried, "O, sire, sad wedding this by which I now am wed.  
 And this from thee ! and even now, while thou my blood dost shed,  
 My mother with her maidens sings the happy nuptial strain,  
 And all the house with music rings, while I by thee am slain.  
 The Achilles thou didst mean for me, as husband, was the grave —  
 Not Peleus' son—and treachery these bloody nuptials gave.  
 When from my home, in stately pomp, the rattling chariot drave,  
 Only behind my veil I gazed, but gave no sweet caress  
 To brother dear, now dead, nor yet to sister's lips one kiss ;  
 And many a farewell I deferred, kind words unspoken then,  
 Going as one who hopes to come to Argos home again."  
 O, hapless one, Orestes, if dark death has closed thy day,  
 From what fair envied heirdom hast thou sadly passed away !  
 This goddess' custom I detest, who every mortal child,  
 That touches blood, bars from her shrine, esteeming him defiled ;  
 Yet she on her own altar eyes, with pleasure, human sacrifice.  
 It cannot be that such a one as Zeus' loving mate,  
 Latona, so great ignorance should e'er at all create ;  
 Nor do I hold it true, that feast to gods by Tantalus given,  
 As if the flesh of children could be pleasant food in heaven.  
 Rather, methinks, the dwellers here, themselves to murder prone,  
 Attribute to the deity the baseness all their own.  
 For, in my judgment, wickedness  
 Exists in none of godlike race.

The chorus now breaks in ; first the one band of them—the strophe—then the second—the antistrophe.

The first asks—Who [are these, who, fleeing from Argos, have crossed

Ocean's surging billows o'er,  
 Changing Europe's friendly shore  
 For the barbarous Asian coast !  
 Who may these be come to hand,  
 Come to this unfriendly land,  
 Leaving other regions fair—

Sweet Eurota's reedy stream,  
 And the fountain's sparkling gleam,  
 Sprung from Dirce's woe and prayer ?

Why to this unfriendly shore,  
 Where the virgin stains all o'er  
 Altar sacred, pillared fane,  
 With the blood of mortals slain ?

Then the antistrophe joins in and replies :—

With their splashing ores of pine,  
 Double-driving through the brine,  
 And with sail-impelling wind,  
 Leaving Hellas land behind,  
 They have sailed their naval car  
 O'er the ocean wave afar.

The first band again breaks in with the question of surprise :—

How those rocks aloft that tower,  
 How that Phineus sleepless shore,  
 Have they ever past ?

How along that roaring coast,  
 On Amphitrite's billows tossed,  
 Ran they fierce and fast,  
 Where the nereids dance and sing,  
 Fifty twining in a ring,  
 Sped they with sail expanding wind,  
 Creaking rudders firm behind,  
 Bounding with the southern gale ?  
 Or with zephyr did they sail  
 To the bird-abounding land,  
 Beech of white and shining sand,  
 Where Achilles gloriously  
 Coursed along the Euxine sea.

The second band again sings, expressing the wish that Helen, the cause of all the misfortunes, might land on this shore, and be slain, and that they might be allowed to see their own land again :—



Would that, to our lady's prayer,  
 Helen, Leda's daughter fair,  
 Might by chance from Troy draw nigh,  
 And around her golden hair,  
 Girt with bloody dew, prepare  
 By our mistress' hand to die !  
 Righteous punishment, I ween,  
 For the wrong of Iphigene.  
 O, how gladly should we hail  
 Tidings of some friendly sail,  
 Mariners from the land of Greece,  
 That our bondage sore might cease !

Then they see the strangers themselves approach-  
 ing :—

Lo ! they come, the strangers twain,  
 Hands together clasped with chain,  
 Victims fresh to Artemis.

Hush, O friends ! at length appear,  
 To the temple drawing near,  
 These, the captive spoils of Greece.

'Twas no idle tale he told  
 When he spoke, this herdsman bold.

Holy one, if what is done  
 By the state give thee delight,  
 Do thou take the gift we make,  
 By the law ordained as right,  
 Though the Greeks such offerings hold  
 All unholy in their sight.

Iphigenia :—

So be it ! But first it is my care the goddess' strict commands  
 And all her wills to see observed. Set free the strangers' hands,  
 For consecrated victims must no longer be in chains.  
 Within the temple go prepare whate'er the law ordains.  
 Alas ! what mother gave you birth ? Who may your father be !  
 And if a sister has been born, who may that sister be,  
 Deprived of two such brother youths, a lonely sister she ?

Who knows on whom such change as this may come at fortune's call ?

For dark are all the ways divine — what evil may befall,  
None knows, since fortune takes a course inscrutable to all.

Whence come ye, hapless strangers, whence ? Long have ye sailed  
the sea

To reach this land, and long from home for ever shall ye be !

Iphigenia and Orestes are now face to face, but unknown to each other, and a long conversation ensues. She asks his name, which he refuses ; then the place of his birth, but he is unwilling to be questioned. Then as a favour she asks him to tell her. Then he says he belongs to Argos, which rouses her curiosity to know about Troy and its fall, and the heroes of Greece, and about Helen, the cause of the war, and about Calchas, the soothsayer that doomed her to die. Her knowledge of Greek affairs excites in turn the wonder and interest of Orestes. Then she asks about Agamemnon, her father, whether he is alive. When told he is dead, she asks *how* he died. "A woman slew him," he says. "And does his wife live?" she asks. "No; her own son slew her." "And are there any children left?" "One daughter." "And is there nothing said of the other daughter, Iphigenia?" "No; only that she is no longer alive." "And does his son (Orestes) still live at Argos?" "He *lives*—wretched, nowhere, everywhere."

And then she exclaims—"False dreams begone; ye are worthless!" To which Orestes replies—"And worthless also are the oracles of the god, for in obedience to them misery has come to me."

Then a change comes over her mind.

She proposes to save his life if he will carry a message, by letter, home to loved ones in Greece; his friend, however, must die.

And then follows a beautiful instance of disinterested love. Orestes refuses the boon of life at the expense of his friend. He pleads that Pylades should be entrusted with the message, and he himself will die.

The proposal touches the heart of Iphigenia, who exclaims:—

O, generous soul, well dost thou seem  
To be of noble birth :  
Staunch to thy friend !

And she agrees that Pylades should bear the message, and Orestes be slain.

Then the dialogue continues as to the manner and performance of the sacrifice, and the funeral rites, and monument which shall follow his death.

She goes inside to fetch the letter. It is addressed, or sent, to her brother, telling him that she whom he thought long dead still lives.

The chorus then, addressing Orestes, laments his doom, and congratulates Pylades that he is to be set at liberty, and see again his native land.

While the chorus retires, and Iphigenia is within, the two friends converse, expressing the thoughts common to them both, that this priestess was like a Greek maiden, she seemed so conversant with the affairs of Greece, and so interested in Agamemnon and his house.

Orestes:—

Who is this maid ? How, like a Greek, she asked us of the fame  
Of Troy, its toils, the Greeks' return,  
And Kalchas wise the fates to learn, and of Achilles' name !  
The unhappy Agamemnon—how she wept as one bereft,  
And asked me of his consort, and the children whom he left :  
Were this fair stranger not a Greek she would no letter send.

Pylades again declares his wish to die instead of Orestes :—

'Twere base in me, if thou shouldst die, and I the light should see,  
For since we have together sailed I ought to die with thee ;  
Because, in Argos and through all the Phocæan valleys wide,  
I shall be called a coward mean, for all men to deride ;  
And most will think (for most are bad) that I have thee betrayed,  
And saved myself, hence I alone the journey home have made :  
Or even that I have murdered thee, now that thy house is down,  
Plotting thy death, myself to seize thy power and princely crown,  
And wed thy sister for her wealth, an heiress of renown.  
'Tis this I hold in fear and shame. No, I'll with thee expire—  
With thee be sacrificed, and laid on the same funeral pyre.

Orestes will not listen to the proposal, but determines to endure alone what the fates have sent him. He bids his friend return to his native land, and there marry the younger sister of Orestes, to whom he has already been betrothed, and dwell in his father's palace, and be happy. And when he had returned he was to build a tomb for him.

Pylades promises to build a tomb and pay it all honour for his sake. But he hints all may yet be well. Perhaps the oracle may yet be fulfilled,

"No, no," says Orestes, "for yonder comes the priestess."

Now, fare thee well, I ever found thee dearest friend of all—  
My comrade in the chase afield, my fellow in the hall,  
And many a weight of my mishaps did on thy shoulders fall.

Phoebus, the seer, has played us false, and driven us, by his wiles,  
Far as he can from Greece, through shame of former oracles.  
I trusted all I had to him, did on his word rely,  
And slew my mother, now in turn myself am doomed to die.

Iphigenia now comes out with the tablet, or letter  
and thus speaks:—

Ye guards withdraw and lend your aid  
Within, where preparations made  
By those on whom the duty lies  
To offer up the sacrifice.  
The tablet, strangers, here I hold,  
With many a leaf within its fold ;  
But one thing more I'd have you know—  
Men different are when plunged in woe,  
And when their troubles disappear,  
Then boldness takes the place of fear.  
I fear this man, charged to convey  
This letter home to Argos, may  
My message deem of little worth  
Whene'er he from this land sets forth.

Then she makes Pylades swear that he will faithfully deliver the letter. But what if he suffer shipwreck and lose it? Then she acquaints him with its purport, so that in the case of its being lost he may deliver the message by word of mouth—

Then know'st what I shall do, because most things have many a fate :

What's writ within the letter folds I will to thee relate  
To tell it to my friends, and so the matter sure will be.  
For if thou bear the letter safe, itself will silently  
Utter its own contents ; but if it perish in the sea  
And thou be saved, then thou wilt save the spoken words for me.

“But to whom in Argos shall I convey the message?”  
asks Pylades.

Then says Iphigenia—“Tell Orestes, Agamemnon's

son, that his sister Iphigenia is still alive, though all have thought her dead." Orestes breaks in—"And where is she?" Iphigenia answers—"It is I whom thou seest. And tell him," she continues, "to bring me back again to Argos ere I die in this barbarous land." Orestes again exclaims—"O Pylades! where are we, O gods?" Iphigenia is surprised, and asks why he calls on the gods. "O, 'tis nothing," says Orestes, "my mind was wandering far away. Proceed." "Tell him," she continues, "that the goddess saved me by putting a stag in my place on the altar which my father slew, thinking it was I, and that she bore me away to this place. Such is the message thou must bear to Orestes, and hast sworn to deliver."

"Ah, then," says Pylades, "that is easily done," and he hands the letter to Orestes beside him, and Orestes receives it, and transported with joy he embraces his sister Iphigenia.

The chorus is shocked, and exclaims—

Stranger! thou the law transgressest,  
While the priestess thou caressest,  
And thy hand her garment clutcheth,  
Which no mortal ever toucheth!

Orestes heeds not, and pours out his heart in gladness.

But Iphigenia doubts, and then questions him as to particulars of the home which only an inmate of the house could know. He reminds her of the pieces of needlework in her own chamber which she had wrought. He reminds her of the lock of her hair she had sent to her mother when she was about to die at Aulis.

*Iph.*—That picture, too, I wove with fine spun thread.

*Or.*—Ere setting out for Aulis?

*Iph.*— Yes, I know.

*Or.*—The marriage though distinguished did not take  
Thy memory away. And dost recall  
How for thy mother thou didst give thy locks?

*Iph.*—Ay, for my tomb memorial in my stead.

He describes the old spear belonging to their ancestor  
Pelops.

Iphigenia is convinced, and cries out—

O dearest one, no more. Indeed  
Thou art to me most dear :  
Orestes, loved and only son,  
Far from thy land and Argos town,  
My own, I hold thee here.

She recalls—

That time I left thee still a babe—  
A stranger newly come ;  
An infant in the nurse's arms —  
A young thing in the home.  
O happy, happier far than words  
Can tell ! What shall I say ?  
It passes wonder, passes thought,  
What has come round to-day.

*Or.*—Together may we henceforth happy dwell.

*Iph.*—O friends, I have obtained a joy—  
A wonderful delight !  
I fear it will escape my hold,  
And take to heaven its flight.  
O Cyclopean hearths and homes,  
O country of my sire,  
O loved Mycenæ, thanks I give  
For the life ye did inspire ;  
And thanks I give for rearing me,  
Since now this brother mine  
Is saved, and still preserved for me,  
Within our home to shine.

This endearing interview is somewhat lengthened, and then the question comes, What is to be done? How escape?

Her woman's wit devises the plan. It cannot be by land. There are too many savage hordes around. It must be by sea. She will pretend that Orestes, the victim, must be purified by the sea-water on the shore because he is a matricide. But then, how obtain the image from within the temple and bear it away? She will say that it also must be purified in the same method, because it has been touched by the matricide. Pylades also must be purified. And so it is agreed that the boat shall be got ready for them all. The chorus of attendants must be sworn to secrecy.

Iphigenia addresses them—

Companions dear, I look to you—my fate is in your hand,  
Whether it shall be weal or woe,  
And whether I must all hope forego  
To reach my native land.

Let silence then seal up your lips, and help us hence to fly,  
For he who has a trusty tongue is held in honour high.  
You see how three dear loving souls depend on one chance breath  
Whether they reach their native land, or here they meet their death.  
Once saved myself, I shall secure that likewise you be free—  
That safe in Hellas you may share my own felicity.  
What say you? Which of you consents? Who does not wish? Reply!  
For should you not approve, then I and my poor brother die.

Then the chorus replies—

*Str.*—Courage! mistress dear, give heed  
That thyself alone be freed,  
For I swear that in my breast  
Hid shall lie thy high behest—  
Let great Zeus be witness how  
I shall keep this solemn vow,



And the lyre of seven-fold string  
Phœbus, seer, will strike and sing,  
Lead thee with escorting hand  
To fair Athens' fertile land.  
Leaving me upon this shore  
Thou wilt speed with splashing oar,  
Halyards fastened taut behind,  
Sails expanding to the wind,  
Stretching o'er the cleaving tip  
Of the swiftly-bounding ship.

*Ant.*—Oh ! the shining course to trace  
Through the ethereal sunlit space.  
Oh ! with wings to end my flight  
And within my home to light.  
Oh ! to take my place once more  
In the dance, where oft before  
Near the bride I used to stand  
'Mid the happy nuptial band ;  
Tripping round in friendly ring,  
Each the other rivalling,  
And contesting who possessed  
Softest tresses, richly dressed,  
And, in splendid robe arrayed,  
Tossed my locks my face to shade.

While the chorus is singing, after Iphigenia has withdrawn, the king of the country approaches and demands, "Where is the keeper of the temple-gate?—the Grecian woman. Has she begun the sacrifice of the strangers?"

He meets Iphigenia bearing the image, and then follows a dialogue between the two, in which she explains her purpose of taking the image to the sea shore, as well as the strangers, in order that they may be purged from defilement, for the sea doth wash all ills of men away.

When asked by the king how she knew the image

was defiled. "By its having turned round on its pedestal and closed its eyes," she answered. This must have been caused by the touch of one guilty of a great crime. What great crime could the strangers have committed? "Matricide! Their mother killed them with conspiring sword." "By Apollo! no barbarian would ever have dared such a crime;" and so the conversation continues by question and answer.

She succeeds in persuading the king, and the more to deceive him orders the strangers to be conveyed in chains to the shore.

Then the chorus begins a long account, in beautiful strains, in praise of Apollo and his exploits, and while they are singing a messenger arrives requesting to see the king, for he has learned that the two strangers have disappeared by help of the priestess, and they have borne away the image of the goddess—

Behold how faithless is the female race!  
And ye are partners in this evil deed.

He continues to demand admittance into the palace. The king hears the noise, and comes out to learn the cause.

The messenger informs the king of the flight of the priestess and the strangers. For the first time he learns who the chief stranger is—Orestes, the son of Agamemnon. He is astounded and enraged. The messenger then tells how he, and those with him, discovered the plot. They saw the ship of Orestes with fifty oarsmen in her, and as Iphigenia was being taken aboard he and others of the king's men laid hold of her to retain her, but they were overpowered

by the strangers and the crew, who got away. But they had not got far beyond the rocks before a dreadful storm arose and drove them back again, so that now they may be easily taken.

Thoas then rouses the citizens and sends them in pursuit, to bring the captives to their doom—

Up, up, my men ! and bridle horse,  
And haste ye to the shore ;  
Go, seize the ship, and hunt them down,  
And fetch them here once more—  
Those impious men. And some of you  
Launch out your swiftest sail.  
Go, hunt them, both by land and sea,  
And bring them without fail.  
When once within our grasp they come,  
Then shall they meet this final doom :  
Adown the rugged cliffs we'll toss,  
Or fix them to the bloody cross.

Had the drama ended here it would have been a real tragedy. But the poet introduces the *deus ex machina*.

Minerva appears, addressing herself first to the king. “ Where sendest thou these troops of thine ? Listen to me, O king ! I am Minerva, daughter of Jove. Cease thy pursuit, stay thy men ! By the divine oracle, Orestes came here, fleeing from the avenging furies, to conduct his sister to Argos, and to bring the image into my land.”

As for Orestes, he is to take the image and his sister to heaven-built Athens, and there, in a certain sacred spot, to build a temple and place the image therein.

And Iphigenia was to be its priestess as long as she lived.

The Grecian women, the chorus, were also to be set

at liberty in return for their disinterested love to their mistress Iphigenia.

Thoas, the king, submits to the authority of Minerva, and allows them all to depart. He says to her—

He is not wise who disobeys  
Thy words, O goddess queen !  
And so I'll stay my wrath against  
Orestes and Iphigene.  
Although they've borne the image off,  
Spoiling my fairest shrine,  
They yielded to a higher will—  
They have no hate of mine.  
'Tis useless to contend with gods,  
Then let them sail with speed  
To thy fair land, and there may they  
And all their plans succeed.  
These women also may depart  
For happy Greece once more ;  
I'll countermand the threatening spear,  
And stop the chasing oar.

Minerva replies—

Thy words meet my approving ken—  
'Tis fate that rules both gods and men.  
Then fly ye winds ! To Athens bear  
The ship of Agamemnon's heir ;  
I, too, will keep you company,  
Guarding my sister's effigy.

The chorus then concludes the piece—

Go, ye happy ones, and blest,  
All your toils are now at rest ;  
Saved at last from woe and shame—  
Saved your honoured house and name.  
O Minerva, high of birth,  
Honoured both in heaven and earth,  
We shall do as thou hast spoken.  
On our ears this day have broken  
Words of heart-enrapturing cheer—  
Words we never hoped to hear.

# Life of Schiller,

WITH

THE SONG OF THE BELL

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE.

Both these interesting papers were read before the literary society, which owed much to the fostering care and the rich culture of the minister.

It is only right to say that the marginal notes accompanying the translation of the Song of the Bell are taken from Dr George Macdonald's edition of that work, published by Blackie & Sons, as is also the description of the casting of the bell, beginning with the words. "The design having been made."

## Life of Schiller.

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SCHILLER, whose "Song of the Bell" is the subject of this paper, is one of the most illustrious names in German literature, ranking with that of Goethe as a star of the first magnitude in that brilliant firmament. Those who would obtain a vivid conception of the life and character and works of Schiller should consult Carlyle, his best biographer and warm admirer. A very brief sketch must suffice here. He was born in Marburg—a small but beautifully-situated town on the banks of the Neckar, about fifty miles north of Frankfort—in the year 1759, a few months later than our own Robert Burns. His parents were worthy, but not wealthy. The mother was industrious, affectionate, and pious, with superior intelligence and poetical taste. The father was a man of great probity and meekness of temper, sincerely desirous to approve himself a useful member of society, and to do his duty conscientiously to all men. He had been a surgeon in the army, but latterly took the position of superintendent over the estates of the Duke of Wurtemberg, in whose em-

ployment he continued till his death. His duties led him to change his residence from time to time, and this was not favourable to the education of his son. Young Schiller had therefore various schools and various schoolmasters. He was just like most schoolboys, thoughtless and gay, yet it is certified of him that a certain earnestness of temper, a frank integrity, an appetite for things grand or moving, was discernible through all the caprices of his boyhood. One anecdote of this period Carlyle repeats, though doubtful of its truth, I suppose, because it is so becoming both the poet and his biographer. Once during a tremendous thunderstorm his father missed him. None of his sisters could tell what had become of young Fritz, and the old man at length grew so anxious that he went out in search of him. Fritz was too young to be aware of the danger of a scene so awful. His father found him at last in a solitary place in the neighbourhood perched on the branch of a tree, gazing at the tempestuous face of the sky, and watching the lightning as it flashed with its lurid gleams. To a reprimand of his parent the whimpering truant pleaded in extenuation that the lightning was very beautiful, and that he wished to see where it was coming from.

His first teacher (from his sixth to his ninth year), who was a pastor as well, seems to have inspired him with the desire of devoting himself to the clerical profession, and this was also the desire of his parents. For the next four years, at the public school of Ludwigsburg, his studies were directed to this object. His disposition was naturally devout, yet his theological studies did not take possession of him. He followed them



rather as a matter of duty. His progress therefore was rather indifferent, and he left the examiners with the designation a boy of good hope, *puer bonæ spei*—not a very high certificate. At this time the Duke, in whose pay his father was, had founded a free school or college, to which he insisted on sending young Schiller. For six years he studied here. It may be said that his life was miserable under the discipline of this academy. "The process of the teaching and living was carried with a stiff formality of military drill." Everything was done by regulation. There was no allowance for individual tastes or inclinations. The same course of reading and composition was marked out for each, and it was by stealth if he read or wrote anything beside. Under these circumstances the study of law became more and more distasteful, and he declared he was not made to be a jurist. He was then, contrary to his inclination, turned to the study of medicine. He had to submit, however, to the despotic sway of the Duke, and he plodded away at his medical studies. Still, under all the vexatious restraints of his school life, he came in contact with other minds. The poets Klopstock, Lessing, Herder, and Goethe spoke to his inmost soul, and made him feel that he also was a poet. While still in his fourteenth year he had completed an epic poem, whose hero was the Hebrew lawgiver—Moses. Later on he attempted the drama, and at the age of eighteen he began "The Robber," but kept it secret until he had completed his medical studies, when it was given to the world. "Its publication," says Carlyle, "forms an era not only in Schiller's history, but in the literature of the world."

While it brought him fame, it brought him also trouble. It was thought to contain dangerous, revolutionary, and immoral ideas. His patron and the friend of his father, the Duke of Wurtemberg, virtually renounced him. His fame brought him in correspondence with some distinguished men of letters and friends of literature. One of these was Dalberg, superintendent of the theatre at Manheim, who became a friend of the young poet, and gave him plenty of good advice. But Schiller was poor, and wanted more than advice. At this time he was in great straits. He was still in Stuttgart, the place of his education, and virtually under guard. He determined to leave the place. He took advantage of a great festival occasion, and escaped in disguise. This was October, 1782. It was the crisis of his life. He went away empty, he says—empty in purse and empty in hope. He was now free, however, though poor. He had force of character. He had genius, and a light from heaven was about his path, which, if it failed to lead him to wealth and preferment, would keep him far from baseness and degrading vices. He passed into Franconia, and assumed the name of "Schmidt." Dalberg sent him sufficient for his immediate wants, and a generous lady made him the offer of a home at Bauerbach. She knew him from his works and his intimacy with her sons, who had been his fellow-students. Here Schiller spent some of the happiest years of his life, and wrote much that added to his fame. In 1783 Dalberg invited him to Manheim to become the theatrical poet of that town, "a post of respectability," says Carlyle, "and reasonable profit," to the duties of which he forthwith addressed himself

with all his heart. He was now contented. He enjoyed peace and liberty and hope. He could follow the bent of his own inclination without the fear of dukes or highnesses. But Schiller's nature was intense and active. He started a periodical devoted to the concerns of the stage, but did not get the help he expected. Its contents were chiefly his own work, and some of his best appeared in that periodical. He soon longed for a wider scene of action than Manheim. He was nominated Counsellor, one of the highest honours conferred by the Duke of Sachsen-Weimar. He also received from unknown donors in Leipsig several beautiful presents. He resolved on going there, and this was an important epoch in his life. At Manheim he had met with one who touched his heart as no other had done before, and from Leipsig he wrote to her father that she should become his wife. But though there was no quarrel, Schiller and Laura were not married, and they did not cease to be friends. "Schiller's position," says his biographer, "at this time was such as to preclude the idea of present marriage. Perhaps in the prospect of it Laura and he commenced correspondence, and before the wished-for change of fortune had arrived both of them, attracted to other objects, had lost one another in the vortex of life, and ceased to regard finding one another as desirable." Not an uncommon thing in this world of change. At Leipsig he was as busy as ever, and wrote some of his famous lyrics. One of these is said to have been inspired by a real attachment, which, however, came to nothing.

He now set to the study of writing on history. The

revolt of the Netherlands and the history of the thirty years' war were his favourite themes. In 1787 he visited Weimar, the residence of Goethe, and though not introduced to him at this time, the two became warm friends later. Through the influence of the latter, the Professorship of History in the University of Iena was given him, which afforded scope for his historical studies. Before this he had received an invitation from the kind lady who had befriended him before to come and visit her at Bauerbach. He went, and it was on this visit that he made a new friend, Fräulein Lengefeld, who, a year afterwards, became his wife. Professor of History at Iena, he had now a home, and it was a happy one. He gave to the world his "Thirty Years' War," "still the best historical performance," says Carlyle, "which Germany can boast of."

The friendship of Schiller and Goethe and their work together, and their mutual influence, would deserve a chapter to itself, and must be passed over.

Schiller was fated to a short life. At the age of thirty-two his first fit of sickness overtook him, and henceforth he had to work at terrible odds. His disorder, chest complaint, was violent and threatening, and though it was overcome for a time, he never had entire health afterwards. It was brought on by unceasing toil and anxiety of mind in which his days had hitherto been passed. He was ordered complete rest from intellectual effort, but his habits and domestic circumstances rebelled against this measure. His case seemed hard, but he did not sink into despondency. Assistance came from an unexpected quarter. A

pension of 1000 crowns for three years was conferred on him by the hereditary Prince of Denmark. No stipulation was added, only that he should be careful of his health, and use every endeavour to recover. Permanent loss of health is a misery to any man, but especially to one, like Schiller, of finer feelings and endowments. It is a cruel fate for a poet to have the sunny land of his imagination darkened by the shades of pain; for one whose highest happiness is the exertion of his mental faculties, to have them chained and paralysed in the imprisonment of a distempered frame. The spirit of Schiller was too vigorous and ardent, however, to yield to melancholy. He disdained to dwindle into a pining valetudinarian. With partial recovery, he applied himself as earnestly as ever to his intellectual occupations. He did not lose his relish for the beautiful, the grand, or the good in any of their shapes. He loved his friends as formerly, and wrote his finest and sublimest works when his health was gone. His mode of life at Iena was simple and uniform, his only excess his literary zeal. He had formed a habit early of studying late at night, which could not be conducive to his health. The same habit continued. "By day he read, refreshed himself with the aspect of nature, conversed or corresponded with his friends; but he wrote and studied in the night."

He turned again (if he ever left off) to dramatic writing, and his famous works, "Wallenstein," "Marie Stuart," "The Maid of Orleans," "William Tell," and other smaller poems, were produced at this period. While returning from Berlin, where he had gone to

witness the performance of his "William Tell," he was seized with a severe attack of his long-standing complaint. From this also he recovered somewhat. But the spring of 1805 came on cold, bleak, and stormy, and his sickness returned, and on the 9th of May his spirit was gone to another sphere. The news of his death fell cold on many a heart not only in Germany, but over Europe. Permit me to quote a few sentences as to his genius and character from one better able than any other man to form an opinion. . . . "Every page of his writings bears the stamp of internal vigour; new truths, new aspects of known truth, bold thought, happy imagery, lofty emotion. . . . Perhaps his greatest faculty was a half-poetical, half-philosophical imagination—a faculty teeming with magnificence and brilliancy, now adorning or aiding to erect a stately pyramid of scientific speculation, now brooding over the abysses of thought and feeling, till thoughts and feelings else unutterable were embodied in expressive forms, and palaces and landscapes, glowing in ethereal beauty, rose like exhalations from the bosom of the deep. . . .

"Schiller's heart was at once fiery and tender, impetuous, soft, affectionate; his enthusiasm clothed the universe with grandeur, and sent his spirit forth to explore its secrets and mingle warmly in its interests. This poetry in Schiller was not one but many gifts. It was not the lean and flashy song of an ear apt for harmony combined with a maudlin sensibility, or a mere animal ferocity of passion, and an imagination creative chiefly because unbridled; it was what true poetry always is, the quintessence of general mental

riches, the purified result of strong thought and conception, and of refined as well as powerful emotion. . . .

“Schiller gives a fine example of the German character: has all its qualities in a high degree, with very few of its defects. We trace in him all that downrightness and simplicity, that sincerity of heart and mind, for which the Germans are remarked; their enthusiasm, their patient, long-continuing, earnest devotedness; their imagination, delighting in the lofty and magnificent; their intellect, rising into refined abstractions, stretching itself into comprehensive generalisations. But the excesses of such a character are in him prevented by a firm and watchful sense of propriety.”

“On the whole,” are the last words of Carlyle on Schiller, “we may pronounce him happy. His days passed in the contemplation of ideal grandeur. He lived among the glories and solemnities of universal nature; his thoughts were of sages and heroes, and scenes of Elysian beauty. It is true he had no rest, no peace, but he enjoyed the fiery consciousness of his own activity, which stands in place of it for men like him. It is true he was long sickly, but did he not even then conceive and body forth ‘Max Piccolomini’ and ‘Thekla’ and ‘The Maid of Orleans,’ and the scenes of ‘Wilhelm Tell.’ It is true he died early, but the student will exclaim, with Charles XII. in another case, ‘Was it not enough to live when he had conquered kingdoms?’ These kingdoms which Schiller conquered were not over one nation at the expense of suffering to another—they were soiled by no patriot’s blood, no widow’s, no orphan’s tear—they are kingdoms conquered from the barren realms of darkness

to increase the happiness and dignity and power of all men; new forms of truth, new maxims of wisdom, new images and scenes of beauty, won from the ‘void and formless Infinite;’ a κτήμα ἐς αἰεὶ, ‘a possession for ever’ to all the generations of the earth.”



## The Song of the Bell.

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THE "Song of the Bell" is one of Schiller's most celebrated lyrical pieces. It is believed that the idea was in his mind some years before he set himself in earnest to put it into poetical form. Even then it cost him more time than he anticipated, but when it did appear it proved a masterpiece.

The idea is to express the various changes of human life and society suggested by the various occasions when the sound of the bell is heard. The speaker is a master craftsman who carries on two trains of thought—one describing the process of making the bell, the other the scenes and the uses to which it is put.

Bells, from a very early period, were associated with the ritual of the church, and acquired a sacred character. They were founded with religious ceremony and solemnly christened and named. There was generally an inscription upon the bell indicating its uses. The inscription or motto which Schiller prefixes to this song is "*Vivos voco, Mortuos plango, fulgura frango*," i.e., "I call the living, I bewail the dead, and scatter the storm"—this last word according to a popular superstition that the church bell could drive away storms and pestilence, enemies and fire.

As there is allusion in the song to the various steps in the process of casting the bell, it may be well to give a short sketch of this piece of workmanship.

"The design having been made, the next thing to do was to construct the mould into which it was to be cast. A pit in the ground was prepared, the same depth as the height of the bell. In the centre of this pit a brick structure was raised, open at

the top, to hold the fuel. This brick erection was coated with clay worked into a bell-like shape. The next thing to be used was what was called the crook, *i.e.*, an instrument worked like a pair of compasses. There were two outer legs. The inner side of one of them was the exact shape of the inner side of the bell, and the inner side of the other the exact shape of the outside of the bell. These were worked on a pivot in the middle of the brick structure to give the surrounding clay the form of the inside of the bell. When hardened this clay was called the core. This core was then smeared with grease, and covered with another layer of clay the same thickness as the bell. The crook was then applied once more to mould the fresh clay into the form of the outside of the bell. Any inscriptions or devices were moulded in wax on the surface of the clay. The whole was then again smeared with grease preparatory to being covered with a mixture of clay and horse hair and other things. This outer layer was called the cope or mantle. Fire was now introduced into the brickwork in the centre through the opening at the top. The clay was slowly baked hard, the grease and the wax melted and evaporated, leaving the core and the cope distinct from the false clay bell lying between them. The cope or mantle was then raised by a windlass and the clay bell removed. The cope was then lowered again to its place, and there was left between it and the core the empty space into which the metal was to be poured. Lastly, the opening at the top was filled by the crown of the mould. This was made separately, and formed the upper part of the bell, including the handle by which it was swung. Small openings were left for the entering of the burning metal."

In the casting of a large bell all this process took a long time. When the song begins this has been completed. The remaining steps are described in detail.

When the mould is finished, the proper quantities of copper and tin are thrown into the furnace. The cooling was a slow process, often taking weeks, during which the workmen were at leisure, though the master is still anxious. The final step is to break up the cope or mantle and extricate the bell from the mould. The poem now begins, "The mould is ready, the hard work of casting is now to begin."

Meanwhile it is good to reflect on the nature and issue of their performance.

Walled within the ground securely  
 Stands the mould of fire-burnt clay.  
 Now, my comrades, all be ready !  
 For the bell must forth to-day.  
     Hot the sweat must flow  
     O'er the burning brow ;  
 Labour brings the master glory,  
 Yet success is heaven's own dowry.  
 An earnest word is well befitting  
     The work in earnest now begun ;  
 When goodly speech goes with the labour,  
     The work itself flows briskly on.  
 Then let us now with care consider,  
     What may from slender power be wrought ;  
 The clown is to be scorned who never  
     Gives to his work an earnest thought  
 For this is man's peculiar honour,  
     For this he was endowed with mind,  
 That what he takes in hand to fashion,  
     Should in his soul be clear defined.

"Heap the furnace  
 with dry wood.  
 Throw in the  
 metals."

Take ye timber of the pine tree,  
     But it must be dry withal,  
 That the solid flame intensely  
     On the copper mass may fall.  
     When it boils, then in  
     Quickly with the tin,  
 So the mixture, tough and glowing,  
 Well-conditioned may go flowing !

"This work reared  
in the deep intrench-  
ment."

"In days to come  
the bell will praise  
the hands of those  
who made it, and will  
sound in sympathy  
with men's varying  
experience."

"The metals are  
fusing, add the alkali.  
See that the alloy is  
kept pure."

"The christening  
bell welcomes the  
child on the thresh-  
hold of life. Infancy  
rapidly passes into  
boyhood, then into  
youth and early man-  
hood, in the train of  
which comes love."

The fabric deep in pit enclosure—  
Reared by the hand with help of fire—  
Will be our witness in the belfry,  
Resounding from the lofty spire.  
It still will last to coming ages,  
And fall on many a human ear ;  
Wailing in sympathy with sorrow,  
And chiming with the choir at prayer.  
The varying haps that fickle fortune  
Brings round to mortals here below,  
The metal crown on high shall echo,  
That men afar the news may know.

White air-bells I see are rising :  
Good ! the mass is fusing now ;  
Let the potash intermingle,  
That will help to speed the flow.  
Wholly free from scum  
Must the mixture come,  
So from metal pure in founding,  
Pure may be the tone in sounding.

For ringing out the festal music,  
It hails with joy the infant dear,  
Beginning in the arms of slumber  
Its earliest walk in life's career.  
What lot shall fall him, joy and sorrow,  
Lie still in time's dark lap unborn.  
The mother's love with anxious tending  
Keeps vigil o'er his golden morn.  
With arrow speed the years fly by ;  
High-souled the boy parts from the maiden,  
With staff in hand the world to roam.

In life's keen strife he fiercely mingles—  
Returns a stranger to his home.  
He sees the maiden stand before him,  
Glorious in youth's resplendent grace,  
Like some fair form from heaven descended,  
The modest blush upon her face.  
Then springs there up a nameless longing—

He wanders lone, and from his eyes  
 The tears break forth ; he shuns his fellows,  
 And all their boisterous mirth he flies.  
 Her step he marks, and follows blushing,  
 Her cheerful greeting makes him blest ;  
 The fairest flower that decks the meadows  
 He calls to grace the loved one's breast.  
 O tender passion, hope delicious !  
 The first love's time of golden dream !  
 When heaven is opened to the vision,  
 And heart regales in bliss supreme.  
 Oh, that its bloom might lasting prove  
 The beauteous time of early love !

"It is time to test  
 the metal, and see  
 whether the fusion is  
 perfect."

See how now the pipes are browning !  
 If this rod be glazed o'er  
 When I dip it in the metal,  
 Then the time will be to pour.  
 Now, my comrades true  
 Test the metal through,  
 Hard and soft together blending  
 Signify a happy ending.

"Can two walk to-  
 gether except they  
 be agreed ? Without  
 such agreement love  
 will not survive the  
 echo of the wedding  
 bells. For the man  
 must go forth to his  
 labour, and the  
 woman must look  
 well to the ways of  
 her household."

For life gives forth a pleasant tone,  
 When rough and tender blend in one—  
 When weak is coupled with the strong.  
 Then ye who bind yourselves for ever,  
 Make sure your hearts are knit together !  
 Illusions short—repentance long.

Lovely gleams the virgin garland  
 In the tresses of the bride,  
 When the merry church bells summon  
 To the scene of festal pride.  
 Ah ! life's fairest festal season  
 Tells of youth already flown ;  
 Bright illusions rend asunder  
 With the virgin veil and zone.  
 The young passion flies,  
 But love must endure ;

The fair blossom dies,  
 The fruit must mature.  
 The husband must forth  
 In life's battle driving,  
 Working and striving,  
 Planting and making,  
 Intriguing and taking,  
 Must venture and chance,  
 His wealth to advance.

Then flows in his wealth like a river unceasing,  
 The granaries full with the treasure increasing,  
 The barns extend, the house is enlarged ;

And inside the other  
 The virtuous housewife,  
 The children's own mother,  
 Manages all :  
 Wisely conducting,  
 The maidens instructing,  
 The boys restraining,  
 Endless active,  
 Hands never still,  
 Increasing the gaining  
 By order and skill.

Fills with her treasures the perfumed recesses,  
 Winds the thread round the loud whizzing spool,  
 Folding with care in neat polished presses  
 The snowy white linen and crisp shining wool,  
 Giving the wealth all its lustre and shimmer,  
 And resteth never.

"His barns are  
 filled with plenty,  
 and he thinks he has  
 much goods laid up  
 for many years.  
 'Thou fool!'"

Then the father, with glance elate,  
 From the gable's far-viewing casement  
 Reckons up all his flourishing state ;  
 Looks at the posts of the corn-ricks tall,  
 Sees there the barn yards filled to the wall,  
 Granary floors bending down with the heaping,  
 And corn fields waving ripe for the reaping.

Then to himself aloud  
 Boasts he in accents proud :

Firm as the solid rock,  
 'Gainst every adverse shock,  
 Here stands in stately grace  
 This, my abiding place !  
 But no covenant can there be  
 With the powers of destiny,  
 And misfortune strides apace.

“All is right;  
 breathe a prayer, and  
 tap the furnace.”

Now then may begin the casting ;  
 Finely notched the fracture lies.

But before we set it flowing,  
 Let a humble prayer arise !  
 Drive the stopper loose !  
 God protect the house !  
 Smoking to the handle bow,  
 Fire-waves burst with lurid glow.

Beneficent is the power of fire,  
 When tamed by man and watched with care,  
 For to this heavenly power he owes  
 All that his art or labour shows ;  
 But frightful grows this power of heaven,  
 If bursting forth, her fetters riven,  
 She takes her own wild course along,  
 This child of nature, free and strong.  
 Woe the day, when loose escaping,  
 None to check her glowing blast,  
 Through the streets of crowded dwellings  
 She hurls the conflagration vast ;  
 For the powers of nature hate  
 What the hands of man create.

From the cloud  
 Blessing pours,  
 Stream the showers ;  
 From the cloud,  
 Without aim,  
 Leaps the flame.

List to the wail from the tower on high  
 'Tis the larum cry !  
 Red as blood  
 The heavens glow ;

That is not the light of day !  
 Shafts of fire rise leaping, flaring,  
 Along the line of streets careering ;  
 Swift as wind, and ever growing ;  
 Hot, as from a furnace glowing,  
 Burns the air ; beams are crashing,  
 Walls are falling, windows smashing,  
 Children crying, mothers flying,  
     Creatures moaning  
     'Neath the ruins.

All is running, rescue, flight,  
 Light as mid-day is the night.  
 Hand to hand, a lengthened chain,  
     With vieing strain,  
 Speeds the bucket ; arching o'er,  
 Lofty streams of water pour.  
 Comes the wind with tempest roar,  
 Flying at the flames that gain  
 With a crash the ripened grain ;  
 Smite the granaries teeming chambers,  
 Fall upon the seasoned timbers,  
 And, as though their breath would sweep  
     Even the solid earth by force  
     With them in their mighty course,  
 Tower they to the heaven's steep  
     Giant size !  
     Hope then dies,  
 Man yields to the gods in might,  
 Helpless, awe struck with the sight,  
     All his works a ruined heap.

“ Desolation.”

Burnt to ashes  
 Is the homestead,  
 Now the wild storm's rugged bed.  
 In the empty window spaces  
     Horror sits aghast,  
 And the heaven clouds flitting past  
     Gaze in.



"He must begin  
the world afresh.  
Wife and children at  
all events are safe."

One look more  
At the tomb  
Of his home,

Then gladly grasps the man his staff—  
Once more a wanderer to roam.

Whatever wealth the fire has eost,  
One comfort sweet remains in store ;  
He numbers all his loved ones o'er,  
And lo ! not one dear soul is lost.

"The metal has  
been run into the  
mould. We hope the  
cast may prove a  
good one."

Earth has taken it in her bosom,  
Happily the mould did fill ;  
Will it also, fair emerging,

Recompense our toil and skill ?  
Had the cast ill spent,  
Had the mould been rent,  
Sad mischance had been our fate,  
Whereas now in hope we wait.

"It is in hope that  
the sower sows his  
seed. It is in hope  
that men commit  
their dear ones to  
the grave."

To the dark lap of holy earth  
The work accomplished we entrust ;  
The sower, too, commits to dust  
His seed, in hope it shall bring forth  
To blessed fruit, by heaven's good will.  
'Onsign we seed more precious still,  
With sorrowing heart, to earth's dark womb,  
Trusting that, from the charnel tomb,  
It shall unfold to fairer bloom.

"Hark to the pass-  
ing bell!"

From the dome  
Sounds the bell,  
Slow and sad,  
The funeral knell.

Solemn, slow, its mournful strokes convey  
One more wanderer o'er the last lone way.

"Death has laid his  
hand on the mother  
of the family."

Ah ! it is the spouse beloved,  
Mother true with matron grace,  
Whom the shadow king is leading  
From the husband's fond embrace,

From the group of tender children,  
 Borne him in her youthful pride,  
 Nurtured in her faithful bosom,  
 Seen with joy grow by her side—  
 Loosed, alas ! the cords for ever  
 Holding close the household band ;  
 She, the loving housewife, mother,  
 Dwells now in the shadowy land !  
 Gone is now her faithful guiding  
 Care that watched by night and day ;  
 In the orphaned home a stranger  
 Now will hold unloving sway.

“While the bell  
 is cooling the work-  
 men may take their  
 ease. The evening  
 bells bring a sweet  
 sense of rest as  
 twilight slowly  
 deepens into dark-  
 ness.”

Till the bell has time for cooling,  
 Let the strenuous labour cease.  
 Like blythe birds among the bushes,  
 All may do whate'er they please.  
 With the twinkling star,  
 Prentice free from care  
 Hears the vesper bell with pleasure ;  
 But the master ne'er has leisure.

In the forest wild afar,  
 Cheerily strides the wanderer  
 To his own dear cottage home.  
 Homeward bleating come the sheep  
 And the oxen,  
 Broad-browed herd and sleek of skin  
 Come lowing in,  
 Filling their accustomed place.  
 With lumbering pace  
 In rolls the wain,  
 Ladened with grain ;  
 Atop the sheaves,  
 Bright coloured leaves  
 In garlands lie ;  
 Then to the dance the youthful band  
 Of reapers fly.

“All retire within  
 their houses.”

Street and square then quiet grow ;  
 Round the social tapers glow,

"Order is the foundation of society, the mainspring of patriotism."

Gather all within their houses,  
And the town-gate creaking closes.

Earth puts on  
Her robe of darkness !  
Yet the citizen secure  
Dreads no ill  
From the evil-scaring night ;  
For the law is watchful still.

Holy, blissful, heaven-born order,  
Binding like to like in one  
Free and gentle joyous union !  
Hers it was to rear the town,  
Summon the unsocial savage  
Hither from the rural waste,  
Enter into men's rude dwellings,  
Teach them gentle ways and chaste,  
And to entwine the dearest band,  
Filial love of fatherland.

"Work is the joy and glory of the free citizen."

Helping each in happy concert,  
Thousand hands their task pursue,  
In their eager rapid movements  
Come their various powers to view.  
'Neath the sacred shield of freedom  
Master stands by workman's side ;  
Each contented with his station,  
Sets at nought the scorner's pride.  
Work is every townsman's glory,  
And success is labour's prize ;  
Worth it is gives kings their honour,  
Ours in hands industrious lies.

"May the terrors of war and disunion never burst upon our town !"

O gentle peace,  
Sweet harmony,  
Wield, oh, wield  
O'er this town thy friendly sway !  
Never may the day arise,  
When the hordes of cruel war  
Through this quiet vale shall rage,  
When the sky,

Evening paints in beauteous tints  
 Of roseate rays,  
 Shall stream forth the frightful glow  
 Of towns and hamlets all ablaze !

“Now, break up  
 the mould.”

Now it has fulfilled its purpose,  
 Break the mould that held it fast,  
 That our eyes may feast with pleasure  
 On the beauteous finished cast.

Swing the hammer, swing,  
 Till the mantle spring !  
 When the mould in fragments lies,  
 Only then the bell can rise.

“Just as the molten  
 metal sometimes  
 cracks the mantle  
 and rushes wildly  
 forth, so it is some-  
 times with peoples.”

The master's hand the mould must shatter.  
 His is the skill, the time he knows.

Alas, if e'er in streams of fire  
 Unchecked the burning metal flows !  
 With sightless rage and thunder-crashing,  
 It scatters the exploded shell,  
 Vomiting forth destruction dreadful  
 As from the open jaws of hell.  
 Rude force devoid of mind controlling  
 Can fashion nothing fair to view ;  
 If people, lawless, grasp at freedom,  
 Prosperity can ne'er ensue.

Alas, when in the state's own bosom  
 The fire of discord burns intense,  
 When bursting from restraint the people  
 Rush wildly to their own defence !  
 When insurrection tugs the cable,  
 The bell screams out discordant, hoarse,  
 And, what to peace alone was sacred,  
 Gives forth the sign to brutal force.

“The alarm bell  
 sounds ; anarchy is  
 let loose.”

The quiet townsman flies to arms,  
 Freedom ! equality ! they shout ;  
 The streets are filled, and squares are crowded,  
 While bands of cut-throats prowl about.

Women are changed to fierce hyenas ;  
 With scenes of blood make sportive jest,  
 And panther-toothed, devour the heart  
 Still throbbing in the victim's breast.  
 Nothing is sacred ; modesty  
 Its gentle sway no more retains ;  
 The evil takes the place of good,  
 And every vice triumphant reigns.

There's danger in the lion roused,  
 There's danger in the tiger's jaw ;  
 But dreadfulest of all that's dreadful  
 Is frenzied man unchecked by law.  
 Woe be to those who lend heaven's torch  
 To men untaught to understand !  
 It lights them not, it but enflames,  
 And lays in ashes town and land.

"The bell lies before us in its beauty."

God has given success and gladness !  
 See ! from out the shell appear,  
 Smooth and bright, the metal kernel,  
 Rising like a golden star,  
 Sparkling in the sun,  
 From the rim to crown,  
 Even the neat escutcheon's lining  
 Shows the master in designing.

"Let us give our handiwork the name of 'Concordia.'"

Come in, now come,  
 My comrades all, and form a ring,  
 The bell must have its christening !  
 Its name shall be " Concordia."  
 Let it assemble in harmonious union  
 And cordial peace the brotherly communion !  
 May this, the master's aim in founding,  
 Its object ever be in sounding.

"Its future place and work."

High shall it swing in heaven's blue vault,  
 Above the lives of men on earth,  
 The thunder for its neighbour loud,  
 And bordering on the stars, give forth

A voice on high to join the host  
 Of brilliant stars that sweetly sound  
 Their Maker's praise, as marching on  
 They lead the year with garlands crowned.  
 Only to things eternal, solemn,  
 Devoted be its metal chime,  
 And hourly with its swift vibrations  
 Hint at the rapid flight of time.

"It only remains  
 to hoist it up into the  
 tower."

Though void itself of soul and feeling,  
 May it lend tongue and voice to fate,  
 And with its swaying motion follow  
 The varying lot of man's estate.  
 Whene'er its tones resounding loud,  
 Fall on the ear and die away,  
 So may it tell how nothing lasts,  
 And that all earthly things decay.

Now, then, with the mighty cable  
 Hoist the bell from out its tomb,  
 To the realm of sound ascending,  
 Heaven's own atmosphere its home !  
 Pull then, pull then, raise !  
 Lo ! it moves, it sways !  
 May it augur civic bliss,  
 Let its first tones be of peace.



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